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His Majesty Bunker Bean

A COMEDY IN FOUR ACTS AND
FIVE SCENES

BY

LEE WILSON DODD

From the Novel by Harry Leon Wilson

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SAMUEL FRENCH

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26 SOUTHAMPTON STREET
STRAND

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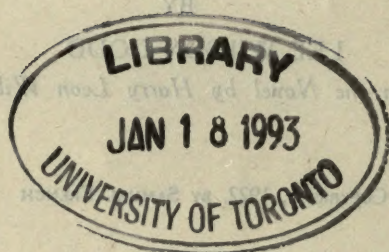
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HIS MAJESTY BUNKER BEAN

was produced at the Astor Theatre, New York, Monday,
October 2, 1916, with the following cast:

<i>Pops</i>	CHARLES ABBE
<i>Bulger</i>	JACK DEVEREAUX
<i>Larabee</i>	HORACE MITCHELL
<i>The Flapper</i>	FLORENCE SHIRLEY
<i>Mason</i>	JOHN HOGAN
<i>Bunker Bean</i>	TAYLOR HOLMES
<i>The Waster</i>	HARRY C. POWER
<i>Mops</i>	MARION KERBY
<i>The Big Sister</i>	CLARA LOUISE MOORES
<i>Grandma, The Demon</i>	LILLIAN LAWRENCE
<i>The Countess</i>	GRACE PETERS
<i>Maid</i>	ANNETTE WESTBAY
<i>Balthazar</i>	WALTER SHERWIN
<i>The Greatest Left-handed Pitcher the World Has Ever Known</i>	
ROBERT KELLY	
<i>Janitor</i>	GEORGE C. LYMAN
<i>The Lizzie Boy</i>	BELFORT FORREST
<i>Louis</i>	GEORGE O'ROURKE
<i>The Very Young Minister</i>	JOHN HOGAN

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACT I: POP'S office.

ACT II: *Scene I.*—Psychic parlor of the COUNTESS.
Curtain down one minute to indicate lapse of one
month.

Scene II.—BUNKER'S apartment.

ACT III: *Living-room* in POP'S country home.

ACT IV: *Same as Act II. Scene II.*

HIS MAJESTY BLUNKER BEAN

was produced at the Astor Theatre, New York, Monday
 October 7, 1918, with the following cast:

POPE	CHARLES ABRAHAM
BUTLER	JACK DEVEREAUX
LEITCH	HORACE MITCHELL
THE YOUNG	FLORENCE SHIRLEY
MISS	JOHN HOGAN
THE YOUNG	TAYLOR HOGAN
THE YOUNG	HARRY C. POWER
THE YOUNG	MARION KELLY
THE YOUNG	CLARA LOUISE MCGRATH
THE YOUNG	WILLIAM LAWRENCE
THE YOUNG	GRACE TERRY
THE YOUNG	ANNETTE WESTBAY
THE YOUNG	WALTER SHIRLEY
THE YOUNG	ROBERT KELLY
THE YOUNG	GEORGE C. LYMAN
THE YOUNG	BELFORT FORREST
THE YOUNG	GEORGE O'Rourke
THE YOUNG	JOHN HOGAN

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACT I: POP'S OFFICE.
 ACT II: SCENE 1—POP'S OFFICE OF THE COUNTESS.
 SCENE 2—POP'S OFFICE.
 ACT III: SCENE 1—POP'S OFFICE.
 SCENE 2—POP'S OFFICE.

His Majesty Bunker Bean

ACT I

SCENE: *Private office of JAMES BREECE, known to his family as POPS.*

DISCOVERED: POPS, *in his shirt sleeves, seated at his desk, his vest is half unbuttoned, his hair untidy. he wears a stiff bosom shirt and detachable cuffs fastened with hideous metallic devices; from a small tray before him he is finishing his hygienic lunch, a glass of milk, four health crackers and an apple. While he eats he works, runs through letters as he munches slowly devouring letters and the crackers simultaneously. He pushes a button before him and buzzer heard faintly off R. Enter BULGER L.2E., a sporty-looking stenographer with notebook and pencil.*

POPS. *Disgusted glance*) Where's Bean. Must have Bean.

BULGER *(Scowling)* Yes sir. Mr Larabee's just come . . .

POPS. *(Angrily)* And of course you keep him waiting, haven't you any sense?

BULGER. *(Holding open door)* Step right in, Mr. Larabee.

(Enter LARABEE, L.2E., elderly millionaire, last word in eloquence, parted white whiskers, gold pince-nez with broad black ribbon, fancy vest boutons.)

POPS. How are yeh, Lar'bee?

LARABEE. How are you, J.B.?

BULGER. Anything more, Mr. Breede?

POPS. Yes, get out. I'll ring for Bean when I want him.

(LARABEE *bustles forward*. BULGER *stick out his tongue at the two men, behind their backs, and vanishes, R.2E.*)

LARABEE. Well, J.B., what's the decision.

POPS. Sit down. Lis'n. M' mind's made up. I'm going to knock the button out from under the Fed'ral Express

LARABEE. Now really, J.B., in the present state of public, opinion, eh? Do you think it wise?

POPS. If I didn't, I wouldn't do it. (*Snorts.*) Public opinion, public opinion be . . .

LARABEE. Now, now, we musn't antagonize . .

POPS. Lar'bee, when you boys follow my lead, you make money. When you don't, you lose it. That's the answer.

LARABEE. But times are changing . . .

POPS. Who says so. The newspapers? Haugh. What can they do? Do they know Fed'ral Express has a big concealed surplus? Does anybody know but you an' me an' the other directors—who's running Fed'ral Express, if we're not?

LARABEE. Yes, yes, but . . .

POPS. (*Banging desk*) We're goin' to cut the nex' dividend—see? Our earnin's have been shrinkin'—hard times, gov'ment interferences. We can't afford to pay it. Then sell like the devil, on paper, down she goes.

LARABEE. She'll go all right.

POPS. Haugh, there's a lot of outstanding stock in small lots. Too much. After we've pounded

her, we'll gather it all in, cheap. That's business, ain't it? Nobody can object to that . . .

LARABEE. H'm . . .

POPS. Well, those that do—let 'em. We'll have the stuff in our hands. We can take our time, an' cut up that melon of ours we've been keeping on ice, when we're good and ready.

LARABEE. Divide the surplus, eh? (*Rubbing his hands.*)

POPS. Fine. I knew you'd see it as I do. It's nothing but a straight business proposition anyway. I'll write Haskins at once to run over for next week's meetin' . . .

(*Someone is tapping on the glass of the door L. to public hall.*))

LARABEE. (*Startled, jumping up*) What's that?

POPS. (*Pointing at door*) If you're going that way, you'll find out.

LARABEE. Ah, certainly.

(*Takes up high hat, crosses L. to door and opens it. The FLAPPER, BREEDE'S youngest daughter, stands smilingly in the doorway. Not tall, almost pudgy, with a plump brown face and steady eyes. Her clothes are the last word in quiet smartness. Very pleasing, rather different little lady.*)

FLAPPER. How perfectly nice of you, Mr. Larabee. I hope Pops will think so. He doesn't always, you know. (*Entering.*) Hello, Pops.

POPS. Chubbins, watcha doing here? (*Pushes button.*) Busy, busy.

FLAPPER. I perfectly knew you would be. You always are.

LARABEE. Well, I'm off. If you need me, J.B., I'll be over at the office for another hour.

POPS. Goin' to the game?

LARABEE. Ah, naturally, couldn't dream of missing it with Bud Matthews in the box.

POPS. (*Pushes button again*) Same here, b'bye.

LARABEE. (*Waving his hat*) You always look sweet as a rosebud, Miss Marie. (*Smiles and goes.*)

FLAPPER. Good-bye. Mr. Larabee is such a silly. (*Sniffs*) He uses prefumery, too, ugh. (*Re-enter BULGER, R.*)

POPS. (*Hearing door, without looking up*) Take J. N. Haskins, Cincinnati, dear sir . . .

FLAPPER. How do you do, Mr. Bulger?

BULGER. I'm very well, thank you.

POPS. Take letter. In the matter meetin Fed'ral 'Spress directors nex' Wednesday utmost importance you should 'tend meetin' in person an' . . . (*BULGER has jumped noisily for the chair below desk, kicking desk as he flops into chair and slaps his notebook down—glaring at him.*) Where's Bean?

BULGER. Mason sent him down to 26 Broadway with those Federal Express proxies . . .

POPS. Haugh. (*Repeating*) Utmost 'portance you should 'tend meetin' in person an' . . .

BULGER. Hold on, sir; I didn't get that. (*POPS throws himself back in chair.*)

FLAPPER. (*Sweetly*) Didn't you? I did.

POPS. (*Before BULGER can reply roars,*) Clear out'a here, M'rie. 'Nuff to drive a man 'sane.

FLAPPER. But, Pops, dear . . .

POPS. (*Exploding*) Gurreat Godfrey . . .

FLAPPER. It's perfectly too bad your foot's hurting you. Never mind, Pops, I've loads of time.

POPS. Utmost 'portance you should 'tend . . .

BULGER. Who's it to, Mr. Breede . . .

POPS. (*Glaring.*) Who's what to?

BULGER. The letter, I didn't catch it . . .

POPS. Haugh, you'll catch it now, m'boy . . .

FLAPPER. Pops, don't fuss so.

BULGER. (*Injured tone*) You didn't give me a fair start, Mr. Breede . . .

POPS: (*Pushing button on his desk*) Oh, you want a handicap, do you. Well, handicaps don't go with me. Young Bean, don't ask for 'em . . .

BULGER. (*Scribbles in notebook, scowling sullenly*) Mr. Judkins, Sioux City, something about. (*Looks up.*)

FLAPPER. Oh, that wasn't what he said . . .

POPS. J. W. Haskins, Cincinnati, dear sir . . .

MASON. (*Entering R.2E*) Sorry to keep you waiting, Mr. Breede . . .

POPS. Then don't do it, where's . . .

FLAPPER. How do you do, Mr. Mason; how is your mother?

MASON. Quite well, thank you.

POPS. And after this, Mason . . .

FLAPPER. (*Calmly*) I'll go down and get a chocolate nut sundae, they have such good ones next the cigar stand, and it's such fun being taken for a stenographer . . . (*At door, L.2E*). So that's all settled and everything . . . (*Starts off.*) Good-bye, Mr. Mason; good-bye, Mr. Bulger. So long, Pops, see you later. (*Exit.*)

POPS. An' after this, Mason, if you've any errands, remember any fool on two legs can run 'em for you. Mr. Bulger here, for instance. No good wastin' brains when all you need's feet. Understand? Young Bean's my private stenographer, and he's gotta be round here when I want him. (*Slaps on old-fashioned soft hat and starts cross L.*) Must have Bean.

MASON. Very good, Mr. Breede, he'll be back in no time. (*Opens door R.*)

POPS. (*Turns*) No time, haugh . . .

MASON. Ah, here's Bean now, Mr. Breede.

POPS. (*Throws down hat in chair and strips off coat*) Tell him to bring in his portable typewriter.

MASON. Yes, sir. (*Calls off R. crossly*) Where've you been all this time? I told you to hurry, Mr. Breede wants you . . .

(*BULGER hastily goes out R.2E., leaving door ajar.*)

POPS trots back to his desk. Just as he drops into chair, enter BUNKER BEAN, R.2E., with small portable typewriter. He softly closes door. He is young, neat efficient, but self-distrustful. Clothes well cut, but inconspicuous. Wears an office coat; throughout the following scene BUNKER nods respectfully when spoken to and accomplishes his task, but never speaks a word. MASON goes back to filing cabinet to file away papers.)

POPS. (*Begins as BEAN enters and shuts door, without looking round.*) Take letter, J. B. Haskins, Cincinnati, dear sir . . . (*Bites savagely into apple.* BUNKER slips into chair, slides paper into machine, begins typewriting at furious speed.) 'Ja get it? (*BUNKER nods, POPS snorts to conceal his pleasure.*) Haugh. In the matter meetin' Fed'ral 'Spress directors nex' Wednesday, utmost importance you should 'tend meetin' in person an'—am I goin' a leetle too fast for you, m'boy? (*BUNKER shakes head and looks up—as before*) Haugh. An' come prepared to support any action I may recommend at time. Need hardly add such action will be for your best interest and bes' intres' of all concern . . . 'Ja get that? BUNKER nods.) Haugh, you's truly.

Two copies, mark it Private. Rush. That's all. (BUNKER *lays letter after removing it from machine, rises before him, bows. As he signs letter*). Hereafter—don't you take orders from Mason. You're not 'sponsible anybody in this office but me. (BUNKER *nods. POPS rubs hand over cheek, jumps up, climbs into coat, trots over L., grabbing up hat as he goes.*)

MASON. (*Turning irritably*) Pardon me, Mr. Breede, do you really mean that . . .

POPS. Mean it? No, of course not; I never mean what I say, do I, Mason.

MASON. (*Crestfallen*) But as head clerk, the discipline of the office, it makes me look . . .

POPS. Going for shave, be back in ten minutes. (*Opens door, turns.*) Wait here, understand. Wantcha. When I want Bean, mus' have Bean. That's all. (*Goes. BULGER enters, R.2E., as door L. slams, and shuts door after him.*)

BULGER. (*Exploding*) "Must have Bean." You only been here a month an' I been doin' time three years.

BUNKER. (*Fitting paper into typewriter*). I don't mind doin' time, Max. I hate to see it wasted. If the old man would only tell me when he wants two copies, I'd call that "efficiency." (*Sets to work to re-copy letter.*)

BULGER. (*To MASON*) Lis'n to Perfesser Bunker Hill Monument. (*Looks at letter over shoulder.*) Federal Express . . . (*To MASON*) Say, take it from me, when his Foxy rebates an' Larabee get together, there's a big pot open and the cards are phoney—Federal Express, ha, ask me, ask me.

BUNKER. (*Looking over shoulder, glancing up.*) Don't do that, Max. This letter's "Private."

BULGER. (*To MASON*) Gee, kid, to hear you talk, a guy'd think you was Julius W. Caesar . . .

MASON. (*Quickly*) Say that's funny.

BULGER. What is?

MASON. Ah, talking of Julius Caesar—wait a minute, Max. (*Draws out folded half sheet of paper.*)

BUNKER. (*Erasing mistake*) Can't you fellows chin somewhere else?

BULGER. Sure we can. But I don't happen to feel like walkin' far . . . (*Sits on BREEDE's desk beside BUNKER and grins at him.*)

MASON. Lis'n here, Max . . . (*Reads slowly.*) "A man certainly ought to be able to find out who he really was hundreds of years ago."

BULGER. Down, Fido, down; go on, Mason.

MASON. It certainly ought to give a man a lot of self-confidence to know he'd been someone big—way back, Julius Caesar, for instance. If a man knew he'd been Julius Caesar once, he wouldn't be afraid of anybody. That stands to reason. Maybe the countess could tell me . . . (*BUNKER, with bent head, types furiously.*) There, wh'da you make of that.

BULGER. Yeh. (*Grabs paper,*) It's Bean's fist all right. (*To BUNKER.*) Why, you must keep a diary just like a girl . . .

BUNKING. (*Jumping up, to MASON*) You've no right to take papers off my desk.

MASON. Haven't I? Well, I guess that blew off. I picked it up over in a corner by the ticker basket. What the dickens does it mean kid. Are you bughouse?

BULGER. (*Who's been studyibg the paper, in friendly tone.*) Never you mind, kid. (*Hands BUNKER paper, stuffs it quickly into his pocket.* Mason don't understand this here psychic stuff. But o' course I'm on to what your driving at . . .

BUNKER. (*Grateful*) Are you, Max?

MASON. (*Loftily.*) Sure, Max has a kind of idea I must have been William Shakespeare once. (*Chuckles.*)

BULGER. Aw, can that. Ain't you got no religion?

MASON. Who d'you think Max must a been, eh?

BULGER. Never mind now, I'm no atthesit. I'm strong for this once upon a time stuff.

BUNKER. Are you, Max?

BULGER. Les'ee, what's this they call it.

BUNKER. Re-incarnation . . .

BULGER. Yeh, you said it . . . (*MASON laughs*)

BUNKER. (*Hotly.*) If you'd ever read anything since you left school, you wouldn't grin. Why, the first man I ever worked for wrote a book about it—"Glimpses Through the Veil of Time."

BULGER. Some name.

BUNKER. Some book. Six hundred pages. I took it all down from dictation. All about Astral bodies and Karms and the Mundane Eggo—like to see it, Max?

BULGER. Sure.

BUNKER. I've a copy in my desk somewhere . .

BULGER. (*MASON laughs, BULGER to BUNKER, who is going.*) Don't you pay no attention to him, kid. He ain't seen the light.

BUNKER. Mason will never see the light. Some men are born blind. (*Exit.*)

MASON. (*Roars with laughter.*) Well, of all the nuts.

BULGER. The kid, ask me. Why, he ain't like anybody else on earth. Scared of his own shadow, an' innocent. Y' can't get him to smoke or take a drink. As for looking sideways at a classy little skirt, not him. He'd do a Marathon first . . .

MASON. Would, eh? Then who's this countess he speaks of . . .

BULGER. Oh, her, Countess Casanova. That's different. She's a dame runs a psychic parlor up to Twenty-eighth Street. Bean lives in that psychic dope.

MASON. Does he?

BULGER. Yes, reads books about it.

MASON. That proves he's crazy.

BULGER. Not on your Monicker. I gotta hunch that way myself. It was me discovered the countess, when I was lookin' for tips on the Big League ratin's. Believe me, the countess is some scientific medicine. She's .OK. I took Bean round there, you ask him about her . . .

MASON. You kids make me tired, running round to palmists and astrologers. (*Chuckles.*) I guess your friend the countess has been fillin' Bean up with that Julius Caesar dope, eh . . .

BULGER. No, it don't sound like her much . . .

BUNKER. (*Entering with big book, hands it to MAX.*) There Max. I guess a man couldn't distate a book that size about re-incarnation if it wasn't all so.

BULGER. (*Weighing the book.*) "Glimpses Through the Veil of Time." All of five pounds, I should say not.

MASON. (*Telephone rings.*) See who that is, will you.

BULGER. Hello . . . (*At phone, BUNKER writes gets change in tone.*) Oh, Miss Breede . . . (*To BUNKER.*) Nix, nix. (*BUNKER stops.*) No, your father's just stepped out. He'll be back soon. What? Oh, certainly, now I get you, Miss Breede, His name's Bean, Bunker, what, yeh, Bunker Bean. (*With a wink to MASON.*) The Flapper wants to speak to you kid . . . (*At phone.*) Just a mo', Miss Breede, here's Mr. Bean right now . . .

BUNKER. (*Stammering.*) Miss—Breede. What's she want with me?

BULGER. (*Holds out receiver, grins, BUNKER hesitates.*) Don't croak, kid. It's Miss M'rie. She's only a flapper. Ask her, ask her.

BUNKER. Hello. No, I didn't say ask her, ask her. That was Mr. Bulger. (*Gulping.*) Yes, this is Mr. Bean talking. But, I—I don't know what to say, Miss Breede . . . (*Turns to BULGER.*) She's rung off. (*Hangs up.*)

BULGER. Rung off?

MASON. What's she want?

BUNKER. I don't know. She asked me to say something, and I said I didn't know what to say . . .

BULGER. Then what'd she hand you?

BUNKER. Thanked me.

MASON. Thanked . . .

BUNKER. Yes, she said, Thank you, Mr. Bean, I just perfectly knew it would be all right. (*Suddenly suspicious.*) See here, you and Max are in this. That wasn't Miss Breede at all.

BULGER. (*Scratching head.*) It was the Flapper all right. But she's got me guessing . . .

MASON. Me, too.

BULGER. Say, kid, I thought you never saw J.B.'s two squabs till we was leaving the building yesterday.

BUNKER. Never did.

BULGER. Well . . . (*BULGER starts typing*) Nix, nix, I was lampin' big sister Gwendolen, same's I always do . . .

MASON. Peacherine . . .

BULGER. Say . . . But I took notice the Flapper had a good flash at you while the old man was climbin' into the car. An' what's more, she rubbed back twice. Honest, kid, you made a hit with her. (*Wink at MASON.*)

MASON. No wonder, the ladies always fall for these gay Gotheries.

BULGER. I'll bet she called you up just to start something . . .

BUNKER. With me? (*Wearily.*) She thinks I'm a joke, most likely. Everybody does. (*Mournfully.*) I think so myself, sometimes . . .

BULGER. Cheer up, kid, maybe the Flapper loves you.

BUNKER. Quit. (*Gloomily.*)

MASON. Well, if there's anything doing, Mr. Bean, take my advice, nurse it. (*Winks at BULGER.*) She's only got a few hundred thousands for pin money.

BUNKER. Think I'd marry for money!

BULGER. Huh, if you wouldn't, kid, it's Mateewan for yours, next stop.

BUNKER. Women don't appeal to me. Oh, of course, some day, if I've climbed clear up to the top, where the people with real class live, I might look 'em over. When a man's made a million or two, I s'pose he ought to get married whether he wants to or not. He's got to have some one around to wear his jewels and sit beside him in his opera box, that stands to reason.

MASON. Going up, eh. (*Sneeringly.*)

BULGER. (*With a grin.*) Say, kid, when does the express elevator start?

BUNKER. Ah, I know I'm only dreaming as well as you do. It's my name. Max, my name's against me. Bunker Bean, call that a name? There's no class to it. A man ought to be allowed to pick his own name, then he'd have some chance of rising. Bean—you can't fight against that. It don't sound right. Theodore Roosevelt, there's a name.

BULGER. Oh, cheer up, kid, you're not so worse.

J.B.'s just been distributing lemons to the rest of us and throwin' you bouquets.

BUNKER. Yes, because I take his work down faster'n he can masticate it, what of it? A man can't rise in the world that way. I want to get clean up to the top. (*Sigh.*) But I can't get started---I've no self-confidence, like you have, Max. That's the trouble. Don't seem to see myself hitting the high spots. Bunker Bean, that's all I am. Why I can't even make myself wear the snappy clothes I like, or . . .

MASON. Well take my tip, kid. You may have been G. Washington for all I care, but I'm head clerk here now, and if you go on bootlicking J.B. and gettin' me in bad, you'll quit worrying about your past an' begin wondering what's going to hit you next. Get that? (*With scowl and look, exits.*)

BULGER. Hot air, his mouth don't fit. (*Pats BUNKER on back.*) Take it from me, that Re . . . (*Cough*) Nation stuff is O.K.

BUNKER. Thank you, Max. Did you ever feel as if you might have been someone big, way back, I mean. Someone with real class. A regular king!

BULGER. Sure I have. That's why nothing phases me. I tell you, it puts some pep in a guy so he can breeze round an' enjoy life. (*Tapping shoulder of BUNKER.*) An' the countess is jest the wise little dame to tell you all about it.

BUNKER. Think so?

BULGER. Positively. (*Confidential*) Say, kid, got a date to-night?

BUNKER. Date?

BULGER. Don't get scared. I'm not trying to shove you from the straight and narrow. But, how about you an' me lookin' in on the countess again to-night, eh? I need a few tips myself.

BUNKER. (*Tremulously*) Do you? (*Seizes his hand.*) Max—you—you're on.

BULGER. Fine, meet you there, see, eight sharp. An' say, I'll just phone the countess. Tell her you and me want a regular bang up seance to-night. I'll ask her to ring up all her controls an' have 'em round handy. (*Slowly.*) Re-in-dignation. Say, there's a lot of things like that a man oughta know if he wants to be a wise little guy . . .

(*Re-enter POPS on run, stripping off coat and beginning to distate a letter as he trots across desk.*)

BULGER *instantly vanishes through door.* BUNKER *grabs notebook from pocket and begins work.*)

POPS. (*Crossing*) Take letter. P. T. Dimeck, San Francisco, Dear Sir: I regard 'gestion as to participation your syndicate underwriting proposed Wabash and Western scrip . . . (*Drops in chair—BUNKER gives glance of scorn.*) An entirely unwarranted interference an' little short of impertinence. Got that? Two copies. Take letter. Peters and Peters, attorney law, Springfield, Ill. Gen'men: Courts having 'cided equipment nes'ry part a road, without which road be totally crippled, what'd I say?

BUNKER. (*Quickly scribbling as he speaks.*) The courts having decided that the equipment . . .

POPS. Skip to las' words . . .

BUNKER. (*As before.*) Without which the road would be entirely crippled . . .

POPS. S'nuff. You will note first mortgage 'quipment bonds take priority first mortgage bonds and gov'n yourself cordingly. Must have report this week probable cost repairs an' main'tnance. As for suit threatened to my General—Haugh!

(*Exploding.*) I can't imagine nothing of less consequence.

BUNKER. (*As he scribbles repeats softly.*) "I can imagine nothing of less consequence."

POPS. Haugh!

BUNKER. (*Startled.*) Sorry.

POPS. (*Grabbing out watch.*) Yours very truly, three copies. (*Springs to feet.*) Goin' cross street, minute see Larabee, wait wantcha understand, wantcha . . .

(*As POPS trots across L., BUNKER jumps up for his coat. Hurries after him, gets him into it, gets to public door, opens it, POPS shoots out, door swings shut. Enter BULGER R.2E, with mail. Goes to desk and drops letters, all but one in a yellow envelope, into letter rack. Then leans back against desk and examines yellow letter.*)

BULGER. Larabee, eh? Federal Express, huh.

BUNKER. Federal Express. What's the idea?

BULGER. Ask me, ask me. (*Slaps letter against hand.*) Say, how about you getting letters like this. Special delivery from a dame, too . . . Chicago . . . (*Feeling letter.*) An' it's not fat or anything—oh no . . . (*Laughs.*) I'm wise, the dame's sending your love letters back. Lucky you. (*Hands over letter.*) Take my tip, an' burn 'em.

BUNKER. (*Glances at letter, starts to pocket letter.*) From my aunt . . .

BULGER. Hold on, that's special delivery. Maybe she's passin' you a check . . .

BUNKER. My Aunt! Never sends me anything but good advice . . . (*Pockets letter.*)

BULGER. Advice nothing. She wouldn't waste the stamps. Say, didn't the countess tell you you'd

get a letter soon from a blonde, change your whole life!

BUNKER. No chance, my aunt's got white hair.

BULGER. Well, that's blonde, isn't it.

BUNKER. (*Scornful.*) Blonde, what's the sense of thinking a big psychic soul reader'd waste her control's time to tell me I'd get a letter from my aunt. Temperance tracts, mostly. Good woman and all that. Runs a boarding house, brought me up when my folks died, put me through business college . . . (*Stuffs letter into pocket*) Blonde. I—I can imagine nothing of less consequence. (*Looks at watch, throws himself in chair, disgustedly.*) Two o'clock. (*Groans.*)

BULGER. Why don't you beat it for lunch right now? Show your independence.

BUNKER. What'd I care about lunch. It's the game I'm after, Max—Bud Matthews is the gratest left-handed pitcher the world's ever seen.

BULGER. Who else is there? Kid, he'll have these Pirates foamy in the fighting top in three rounds. It's the dentist this P.M. for mine.

BUNKER. (*Sighing.*) Oh, what's the use. It's letters all day for little George W. me.

BULGER. (*Picks up BUNKER's notebook.*) Want me to run this off for you?

BUNKER. Can you read it?

BULGER. Sure. (*Reading.*) Um—As to—syndicate—um—Weber and Western scrip— Say—what's this—the old man never dictated this. This is one rotten suit of clothes—for God's sake, have your cuffs sewed on. Gee, kid, this looks interestin'—um—call that food. If you think you're a magnate—what makes you eat like a maggot— (*Whistling.*) Say—

BUNKER. The old man gets on my nerves, that's

all. What's a few tainted millions more or less, if you've no class.

BULGER. Ask me. Ask me.

BUNKER. Detachable cuffs. Gray wool socks. Why, I'll bet he's wearing red flannels right now, in June.

BULGER. Kid, you're immense. I been underestimating you.

BUNKER. It's the principle of the thing. That's what riles me. I don't say a multi's got to be an advanced dresser, some men can do it. (*Sadly.*) Some can't. But wool socks, detachable cuffs, that's what hurts. I wouldn't mind his jailing me like this, if he only looked human—

BULGER. (*Throws down notebook.*) Tell him so some day, when he's got kidneys in his feet, an' watch your salary fade. (*To door, grinning.*)

BUNKER. (*With disgust.*) Salary, fifteen per . . .

BULGER. Fifteen since when . . .

BUNKER. This morning . . .

BULGER. (*Wrathfully.*) You only been here a month an' he raised you. An' little yours respectful still doin' time at ten . . . (*Mutters.*) Fifteen

BUNKER. (*Ring, answers.*) Hello, oh, oh, yes, Mr. Breede, I'll come right over. (*Hangs up receiver savagely.*) Wage slave. That's what I am. (*Grabs up notebook.*) Got to beat it across to Larabee's office. More letters. (*Takes office coat, as he gets to door L.*)

BULGER. What's the idea of strippin'?

BUNKER. Don't like to wear an office coat crossing the street. Principle of the thing, Max. (*Opens door.*) May be a wage slave now, but if I ever do rise, I won't be a misfit like the old man. I'll belong . . . (*Bolts off.*)

BULGER. That's the boy. (*As BUNKER botls off the letter falls from pocket of the office coat over his arm. BULGER sees it fall and stoops to recover it.*) Oh, Beanie. (*When he straightens up the door has swung to in his face. BULGER out with hand to knob, then stops short. He examines letter curiously, holds it up to light, tests the way it is sealed with finger nail, then swiftly opens it with letter file opener, and clips along flap. It opens, he quickly examines contents, glances at check, gulps.*) Ho'y Sizzler. (*Goes to door R. and listens, running through letter hastily, hesitates, then returns letter and check to envelope, sticks them in pocket and crosses to desk phone. At phone, cautiously.*) Gimme 101 Bryant, yep, rush it, kid. Nix on the line is busy stuff. (*Pause and whistles.*) Hey—Countess Casanova. Listen, this is Max Bulger, see. You remember Bean, my friend Bean. The funny little gink, sure. Say, listen. He's going round to see you t'night—eight o'clock—well—you gotta be there. The boob's come into money. (*Soft y.*) Ten—(*Disgustedly.*) Naw, thousand, ten thousand, I thought that'd lis'n well. Say, I got a letter fer him here he ain't read yet, about the money. I'm going to sneak a copy, see. Aw, no chance, fell open, I never touched it, yeh, that's the girl. I'll be there early, see? Fix it up with you before he blows in. Hay, halt— Wait. Listen, he's got a new bug this time, yeh, bug, B U G. Insect, sure. Has it all doped out he was a king or something onct. Yeh, someone big like Julius W. Caesar. Got me? (*Pause.*) Napoleon. Fine, you feed the gink his letter before he's read it himself. Me for the sympathetic friend thing. He's easy. Hey—fifty fifty. You're on. (*Outer office door L.E. opens, enter breezily the WASTER, BREEDE's only son. Gilded youth. Hearing latch click, softly.*) Cheese

it, countess. (*Glance round.*) How are you, Clarence?

WASTER. Morning, Max?

BULGER. (*At phone.*) All right, sir, I'll attend to it at once. (*Hangs up receiver.*)

WASTER. Where's the guv'nor . . . (*Just then BUNKER opens door from L.E. and POPS darts in, followed by BUNKER and dictating as he comes. BULGER vanishes to outer office, R.2E.*)

POPS. (*Crossing and chewing Pittsburgh stogie.*) Take letter.

WASTER. Hello, Pops.

POPS. C. B. Detrentice, twenty-six Broadway, Dear Sir: (*Sees son.*) Clarence, what you doin' here? Get out. Busy, busy . . . (*Sits.*) Refer-rin' Federal Express stock would say having conferred Lar'bee matter gradually shapin' toward result talked of . . .

WASTRE. (*Airily*) Bravo, Pops; still at it, I see.

(*BUNKER again at post, glances at WASTER with admiration, then glances at POPS' detachable cuffs.*)

POPS. (*To BUNKER.*) 'Ja get it?

BUNKER. Yes, sir.

POPS. (*To BUNKER, ignoring WASTER, savagely,* What'd I say? Oh, have 'structed Lar'bee mus' proceed with caution as any leak information this time would jep'dise favorable outcome so advantageous to all concern. Yours truly. (*Sharply pulling at cuffs.*) What's the matter my cuffs, anything wrong with me? Take letter.

WASTER. (*Crosses quickly to desk.*) Hold on, Guv'nor, I'm a bit rushed myself.

POPS. (*Gruffly.*) Well, out with it. What's the damage? (*Takes out roll of bills from pocket about to hand WASTER money.*)

WASTER. (*Airily.*) Fact is, Pops, some of the fellahs at the club last night induced me to come in on a little game. Didn't want to peeve 'em—reasons. Monty Fallows is going to judge my chows at Pipin Rock and . . .

POPS. (*Raging*) Didn't I tell you gamblin' debts don't go with me?

WASTER. I know, Pops, but this is special. Diplomacy—I want a blue ribbon for Ming Ching II and Monty . . .

POPS. (*Swinging round to face him.*) Haugh! Might's well have this out with you, my boy . . . (*To BUNKER.*) Hadjer lunch?

BUNKER. (*Almost in a whisper.*) No, sir . . .

POPS. (*Pushes plate of hygienic crackers over to him. BUNKER makes look of disgust, which is appreciated by WASTER, who meets BUNKER's eyes, and grins in friendly fashion. BUNKER, feeling he must, nibbles at cracker with evident distaste.*) Now sir.

WASTER. (*Breaking in.*) See here, Pops. You know how first chap fellahs like Monty feel about debts of honor. It'll put me in a beastly hole if . . .

POPS. (*Springing up angrily.*) Not a cent—sir, clear out. Madjer bed, lie in it. You're nothing but a waster . . . Wasters don't go with me . . . (*Chew on stogie.*)

WASTER. (*His smile fading.*) But, Guv'nor, you don't seem to get me. I . . .

POPS. (*Turning on him.*) Wha' the devil, you mean interferin' my work. Haven't I tol' you . . . (*Crosses door R.L..2E.*)

WASTER. Oh, all right, we'll let it go at that . . . (*Crosses door R.2E.*) Sorry you're feelin' nasty, it's bad for your gout. If your foot swells to-night remember I warned you. (*Cross to door L.*) Ta, ta, Guv'nor—see you at dinner.

POPS. *Exit R.2E.*) Mason—Mason . . . (WASTER grins and winks at BUNKER, who rises, opens outer office door.)

BUNKER. (*Apart timidly to WASTER*) If, if five dollars would help you out?

WASTER. (*Apart—touched.*) Thanks, old top, no good; five hundred would be more like it.

(BUNKER opens door, L.2E. WASTER starts off. FLAPPER enters and confronts him. WASTER surprised.)

FLAPPER. Hello, Clarence.

WASTER. Where you drop from?

FLAPPER. Where's Pops?

WASTER. Better beat it if you're strapped. Pops is savage . . .

FLAPPER. I just perfectly don't care.

WASTER. (*Winks again at horrified BUNKER.*) Well, wish you joy.

(*He exits, BUNKER holds door. FLAPPER comes slowly in, she looks into BUNKER's eyes in funny determined little way. BUNKER in confusion. She passes him and seats herself at R. off desk. Pause. Enter POPS D.R.2E.*)

POPS. Lo, Chubbins.

FLAPPER. Lo, Pops.

POPS. Back again. Whatcha doin' here. * Busy, busy, busy. (*Starts dictating again, as he trots to his chair. BUNKER at post.*) Take telegram Post and Post, attorneys, Chicago, cipher it. If you want my private business in future get busy now. The law's delays don't go with me. Telegram Senator Stebbins Washington. Your appointment on Committee Industrial relations highly satis-

factory me and business interests country keep the brakes on. Cipher it. Telegram Bobby Wylie, Caddie House, Ardsley-on-Hudson, Conditions on tenth green last Sunday disgrace to club, give it immediate attention, no copies,

(*The FLAPPER pats her skirt, sits clamly in easy chair across desk from BREEDE and never takes her approving eyes from BUNKER as he works. He feels her eyes and hardly knows what he is doing.*)

FLAPPER. (*Pause.*) All through, Pops? I met such a nice girl while I was having my sundae. She's a manicure. We perfectly had lunch together. I converted her to the movement, too.

POPS Haugh. (*Writes and ringing.*) Great Godfrey, what's the use of pushing buttons when nobody answers 'em. (*Try door outer office an open it.*) Where's Mason, hey. (*Starts off, turns back a second.*) Oh, daughter . . . (*Exit D.R.2E.*)

BUNKER. (*Rise, dazed.*) Pl—pleased to meet you.

FLAPPER. (*With friendly nod.*) That's nice I met you yesterday. I mean I saw you, from the car.

BUNKER. Some car.

FLAPPER. That little old last year's car Mops won't use it, so Pops has to. You were standing on the pavement with that horrid Mr. Bulger when Pops came down, and I asked about you. Did you see me?

BUNKER. I—I almost think so—I knew I saw the car, little old last year's car . . .

FLAPPER. Well, sometimes people don't see me when I'm next to Gwendolen. Dear Gwen's clothes always shout "Look this way, please."

BUNKER. (*Getting courage.*) Miss Breede, why did you call me up—Miss Breede?

FLAPPER. (*Giggling.*) Oh, I had a kind of sort of a plan, and I just knew you'd be wondering.

BUNKER. (*Puzzled.*) D—did you?

FLAPPER. Of course, I never can tell whether I like people till I hear them speak, can you. But I perfectly knew it would be all right after . . .

BUNKER. What? (*At sea, blushes.*) I mean, that's what you said over the phone . . .

FLAPPER. Yes, didn't I. (*Nodding brightly.*) Your interested in the movement . . .

BUNKER. Movement.

FLAPPER. (*Points to woman's suffrage badge on her breast.*) The movement.

BUNKER. (*Falters.*) Oh, yes, greatly—every little movement, you mean . . .

FLAPPER. I perfectly don't.

BUNKER. (*Lamely.*) Er, it's a song—wasn't it?

FLAPPER. Ah, do you sing. I perfectly knew you would. Granny's writing a song for the cause to the tune of "Break, Break, Break . . ."

BUNKER. (*Miserable.*) Delighted, er, that is, would be, but I don't sing.

FLAPPER. Well, you can march anyway, in the man's auxiliary? Granny and I marched in the parade last year. Granny and I always hang together, you know. If she wasn't so old we'd run over to London and get arrested.

BUNKER. What—what for?

FLAPPER. Silly, for breaking things. Granny'll pin a badge on you. We have to take advantage of every little means. (*Suddenly jumps up, clapping her hands.*) Wait, you shall have my badge—now.

BUNKER. P—please, don't let me deprive you, really, I couldn't think of . . .

FLAPPER. (*She steps up to him, lays one hand on his shoulder, looks frankly into his face, pins badge on his lapel As she does so.*) Don't Scrooge away so. I perfectly won't stick you. There. (*One hand on his shoulder, give the badge a friendly pat. Just then the door opens and JULIA, FLAPPER's mother, appears in doorway, with GWENDOLEN, her big sister, and GRANDMA the demon looming behind her. JULIA is large overdressed peevish-looking woman BIG SISTER, with golden hair, is tall, self-conscious and absurdly vain. GRANDMA the demon is a trim, vigorous, shrewd-looking, self-reliant old lady.*)

JULIA. (*From the doorway in accents of horror.*) Marie, what on earth are you doing? (*Sails forward followed by others.*) Where's your father? Fancy his leaving you like this unchaperoned. The poor man must have lost his wits.

BIG SISTER. (*With reproof, shutting door.*) Mother, the clerks are listening . . .

GRANDMA. (*With speed, eyeing BUNKER.*) Who is this young man, Marie. Does he work here . . .

FLAPPER. Yes Granny. (*Calmly—to BUNKER*) You do, don't you? Mops, this is Mr. Bean.

JULIA. Bean . . .

BIG SISTER. (*Tittering.*) Is that—all.

BUNKER. (*Looking about for some avenue of escape.*) Bunker Bean—Pl-pleased to . . .

BIG SISTER. From Boston . . . (*Titter.*)

FLAPPER. (*Darting a look of hate.*) Gwen, you perfectly shan't tease him . . .

JULIA. (*Ignoring BUNKER.*) Marie, I asked you a question—where is your father?

FLAPPER. (*Ignoring her mother.*) Oh, Granny, Mr. Bean believes in the movement . . .

GRANDMA. (*Pursing her lips.*) Um—so far so good.

FLAPPER. He sings, too, at least, he marches. He's promised to join the men's auxiliary right away.

JULIA. Marie, where is your father?

FLAPPER. Pops. Oh, he's all right, Mops, truly. Don't fuss so. (*To BUNKER.*) You have promised, haven't you . . .

BUNKER. (*Trying to edge to door.*) Er—have I?

FLAPPER. (*Delighted*) Of course, that perfectly settled and everything . . .

JULIA. (*Tragic, giving up the struggle.*) Gwendolen. You speak to her.

GRANDMA. (*Sharply.*) For goodness sake, Julia, what is the matter? Don't bedevil the child. She's doing no harm here as I can see . . .

BIG SISTER. (*Sweetly.*) You ought to wear stronger glasses, Grandma. (*Looks at BUNKER, who is in confusion.*)

BUNKER. (*Turns apologizing, humbly to desk.*) I—I beg your pardon. (*She laughs.* BUNKER turns.) I beg your pardon . . .

GRANDMA. (*Nodding.*) That's all right, young man. I like nice manners. A body can see you've been well brought up. (*BUNKER almost reduced to tears leans against desk for support, blushing.*)

JULIA. (*Exploding.*) What I want to know is this, Marie. When we all went into Lord and Taylor's to shop why did you say you had a headache and stay in the car and then make Jools . . .

BIG SISTER. (*Correcting.*) Mother, Jules . . .

JULIA. Jeels, then, I said Jeels anyway. (*Turns to FLAPPER.*) Why did you deceive me and then make Jools . . . (*BIG SISTER sighs.*) run down and leave you. What is the meaning of that, I want to know.

BIG SISTER. (*Wickedly.*) That surely is plain

enough. Little Marie felt she ought to convert—Mr.—Mr. Bean to the cause. (*Titter.*)

BUNKER. (*Desperately*) Pardon me, I—I heard the bell. (*Starts to door.*)

GRANDMA. (*Catching him by sleeves and restraining him.*) No, you didn't, young man. None of your pranks. My ears are as good as yours. Better, maybe. How much does Jim pay you a month down here. . . . (*BUNKER opens and closes his mouth like a fish, then re-enter POPS on the run.*)

POPS. Take letter, J.N. Haskins, Cincinnati, dear . . . (*Sees them, stops dead, then explodes, wrathfully.*) Gur . . . great Godfrey! Is this my office or isn't it. Nothing but interruptions all day. 'Nuff drive a man crazy. Why didn't you bring the neighbors and servants and have tea. Clear out, all of you.

JULIA. James, James, keep your temper. We followed Marie here to find out what she was up to and take her home.

FLAPPER. Mops, don't fuss so.

POPS. That's what I say, Julia. You're always fussin' . . .

FLAPPER. (*Firmly,*) I'm going home with Pops. That's all I'm up to.

JULIA. You're going home with me.

GRANDMA. For goodness gracious sakes, Julia, why shouldn't the poor child ride home with her father?

FLAPPER. (*Links her arm in father's.*) Yes, Pops, dear, why shouldn't I?

POPS. No reason can see. Wantcha go with me ball game, if it isn't too late. Good-bye, rest a you. See you all dinner. Enjoy yourself.

JULIA. Now, James . . .

POPS. (*To BUNKER.*) Open the door . . . (*Trots over to desk; the FLAPPER seats herself, calmly*

triumphant in easy chair. BUNKER crosses L. to door, followed by GRANDMA.)

BIG SISTER. (*Taking JULIA's arm.*) Come, mother, don't make a scene. It's too silly. (*Leading her mother over softly.*) Wait till you get father alone. (*Exit JULIA L.2E. BUNKER opens door to public hall. BIG SISTER sparkles at him.*) Take care, Mr.—(*Titters.*)—Mr. Bean, you're in awful danger. I warn you . . . (*Tosses her head, laughs, and exits L.2E.*)

GRANDMA. (*To BUNKER.*) Got any bad habits?

BUNKER. (*Indignantly.*) Well, I don't know, I'm young yet.

GRANDMA. Um . . . (*Doubtful, looks him over. Exits.*)

BUNKER. (*Quickly shut door, mutters.*) Cheek.

POPS. (*Calling to BUNKER.*) What's I saying . .

BUNKER. (*Crossing back to desk.*) Letter—J. N. Haskins . . .

POPS. S'nuff. Dear Sir: Please note closed schedule car repairing make two copies—an' let me have figgers estimated cost at your earliest convenience . . (*Grabs out watch.*) Yours truly—what time's that game called?

BUNKER. (*Jumping.*) Three . . .

POPS. Jus' got time to make it. (*Jumps up, gets into coat and grabs hat, to FLAPPER.*) C'mon.

FLAPPER. (*Rising.*) Papa, how rude you are. Can't you see poor Mr. Bean wants to go too.

POPS. Haugh. How'd you know. (*To BUNKER.*) Do you?

BUNKER. Letters . . . (*Swallowing hard, points to notebook.*)

FLAPPER. I just perfectly knew he did.

POPS. (*Pushing button desk.*) Two forty now, getcher hat. Ring that buzzer . . . (*FLAPPER does so.*) Take y'up in car. Don' forgetcher notebook.

Dictate on way up. (*Enter BULGER.*) No, tell Mason stay here and keep the office open till Mr. Bean returns . . .

BULGER. Saturday?

POPS. Any objections?

BULGER. No sir; no, sir; no, sir; . . . (*Snarls.*)

POPS. Mr. Bean'll be here by five to get off the letters. (*BUNKER looks sick.*)

FLAPPER. Oh.

POPS. (*Grabs her arm.*) C'mon, Mr. Bean . . . (*Pulls the FLAPPER, who half pulls BUNKER over L. to door.*)

BULGER. (*With exaggerated dignity.*) Excuse me, Mr. Bean, about that letter a' yours, you dropped it an' . . .

BUNKER. (*As POPS opens door.*) Dropped letter Oh, from m'aunt, I—I can imagine nothing of less consequence . . .

POPS AND FLAPPER. (*Together.*) C'mon. (*They rush BUNKER off.*)

CURTAIN

ACT II

SCENE I: *Psychic parlor of the Countess Casanova, Forty-eighth Street. Evening of same day as Act I.*

DISCOVERED: COUNTESS CASANOVA, seated L. of center table, on which is a large, supposedly crystal globe. A fat volume—BUNKER'S copy of "*Glimpses Through the Veil of Time*"—lies on the table before her. She is nervously smoking a cigarette, and studying a typewritten sheet of paper, the contents of which she is trying to memorize.

COUNTESS. (*Repeating*) Check for ten thousan'—check for ten thousan'—life insured t' make res-titooshun—life insured t' make restu-tooshun—fifty shares Fed'ral Express—fifty shares Fed'ral Express—fifty shares—(*Enter R. MIRA, COUNTESS' maid. Anxiously.*) Well—well?

MIRA. The professor said he'll be right up . . .

COUNTESS. I must see him before Max comes. Max mustn't know he's here—understand?

MIRA. (*Smile.*) Of course.

COUNTESS. And nobody's to get in here t'night except Max—and Mr. Bean. (*Bell.*) There's Balthazar now. (MIRA *open door.*) Mira—

MIRA. (*Stopping.*) Ma'am?

COUNTESS. What is it I pay for?

MIRA. To keep my ears open an' my mouth shut . . .

COUNTESS. Good girl, I'm all in a tremble to-night—I feel I'm not goin' to do myself justice . . . (*Bell.*) Oh, quick. Balthazar hates to be kept waiting. (MIRA *admits* BALTHAZAR. *Anxiously.*)

BALTHAZAR. (*Entering.*) Coast clear, countess?

COUNTESS. (*Humbly.*) Yes, Balthazar.

BALTHAZAR. Well, my child?

COUNTESS. Max Bulger'll be here any minute—with a repeater he's been nursin' for me—clerk in his office named Bean . . .

BALTHAZAR. Bean—?

COUNTESS. (*Tremulously.*) The little boob's come into money, Balthazar.

BALTHAZAR. Bean? A boob called Bean—into money? (*Bitterly*) But I'm not surprised. That's the way the world's run. How much? The grand total!

COUNTESS. Ten—(*Swallows hard.*)—thousand.

BALTHAZAR. Thousand—(*Pause—then to MIRA*) Did she say thousand?

MIRA. Ten of 'em, professor.

BALTHAZAR. (*His eyes gleam. To COUNTESS.*) This is out of my depth, my child.

COUNTESS. (*Rather wildly.*) Oh, Balthazar—if I'd only had your education.

BALTHAZAR. (*Correcting her.*) My brains, child—my brains. But you have your uses—you strike the eye. (*Quick transition.*) How many times has the boob called Bean—been here?

COUNTESS. Three or four . . .

MIRA. Naw—on'y twice.

BALTHAZAR. Ha. That's fortunate. What did you feed him?

COUNTESS. Nothing fancy. The usual tips on the Big League ratings.

BALTHAZAR. (*Disgusted.*) Bum stuff, countess. You cramp my style. However . . .

COUNTESS. (*Flourishes paper in hand.*) But see here, Balthazar. Here's a copy of a letter of his—Max sent it up to me and I've got it pat.

BALTHAZAR. A love letter?

MIRA. Naw—about the money. A letter he ain't never read yet . . .

BALTHAZAR. (*Sharply, glancing at copy of letter, which he puts into his pocket later.*) Ha.

COUNTESS. Balthazar—he don't even know yet—how rich he is.

BALTHAZAR. Doesn't know—about this money? COUNTESS *shakes her head.*) Do I dream, Mira? (*MIRA shakes her head.*) H'm, countess, you did well to send for me . . . (*Then sharply.*) What's he after? What's his line?

COUNTESS. (*Anxiously.*) That's just it. He's too deep for me. Max says he thinks he was a king or something once . . .

MIRA. You know, professor—before he was just a nut.

BALTHAZAR. H'm. (*Then sharply, to COUNTESS.*) Where does that side partner of yours come in?

COUNTESS. Max?

BALTHAZAR. The same.

COUNTESS. Well, I suppose he'll want fifty-fifty.

BALTHAZAR. Then—I bid you good evening. (*Starts for door.*)

COUNTESS. (*Pursues him.*) Balthazar . . .

(*Clutches his arm.*) Don't desert me—don't get sore.

MIRA. She on'y promised him, professor.

COUNTESS. (*Quickly.*) That's all.

BALTHAZAR. H'm. (*Severely.*) Fifty-fifty, my child?

COUNTESS. (*Crushed.*) I leave it all to you, Balthazar . . .

BALTHAZAR. Ha. Then to work. The lights in your crystal globe there—if I remember rightly—are red and white.

COUNTESS. Yes.

BALTHAZAR. Good. (*To countess.*) Now listen, my child. Unhappily—you must receive Mr.—

MIRA. Bean.

BALTHAZAR. The same. (*To COUNTESS.*) And frankly, you may strike the eye—in fact, you do, but here, countess . . . (*Taps forehead.*) up here.

COUNTESS. (*Sadly.*) Oh, I know—don't rub it in.

BALTHAZAR. Trust to me, my child. (*Bell.*)

COUNTESS. Oh, Lord. There they come already.

BALTHAZAR. (*Sternly, takes up book from table.*) Nerves, countess? (*Shakes his head; takes up his hat.*) Admit them—flatter them—lead them on. I shall retire within—and gather what I may through the aperture. (*Goes back to door.*) But, remember—should the red light flash—it means danger . . .

COUNTESS. Danger?

BALTHAZAR. (*Impressively.*) The same. But join me presently, Countess. We must deliberate . . . Ten thousand. We must indeed deliberate. (*Bell again.*) Oh, your young friends grow impatient. (*Goes off, quickly, back.*)

COUNTESS. (*Excitedly.*) Mira—if that's Max an' Mr. Bean show 'em in here—and say I can't be

distrubed 'till I've come out of the silence—and don't forget the lights. (*Goes within.*) I wait. (*MIRA darkens the room.*)

MIRA. (*Going off R. to answer door.*) There. I guess that's more—atmospheric. (*Goes quickly out, and immediately re-enters, followed by BULGER and BUNKER, who is looking very pale and solemn.*)

BULGER. (*Apart to MIRA, as he enters, tapping his coat.*) I got the letter here—see? (*MIRA nods, then turns to BUNKER who is coming slowly in.*)

MIRA. (*Softly, with a thrill.*) Countess Casanova has just passed into the silence—I don't dare distrub her yet—Mr. Bulger, don't you and Mr. Bean talk too loud neither—some of her controls are that sensitive . . . (*Lays finger on lips, and quickly, back.*)

BULGER. (*Taking MIRA's tone.*) Kid—this is a goin' to be a big night for you. I guess the countess controls are workin' over time this evening. (*Takes BUNKER's hat and tosses it with his own into cosy corner, up stage.*)

BUNKER. (*Sadly.*) Max, things don't break right for me. Never have . . .

BULGER. (*His voice rising.*) Go on. Who saw the Giants shut 'em out's afternoon? You or me?

BUNKER. Sh-sh. (*Then, sadly.*) Me. Sat in a box with the old man—couldn't take my coat off—couldn't keep my score-card straight—Flapper asked so many fool questions. She doesn't know an inside play from an inshoot . . .

BULGER. (*Enviously.*) Kid—you don't know pie when it's baked for you.

BUNKER. Sh-sh. Call it pie to have a woman's suffrage badge pinned on you—and then get ragged by a flapper—just when the home team's pulling a double? Call that pie?

BULGER. (*Seats himself L. of table.*) Do I?

Mince, with a slip on. Why, kid, you've made a hit with sweet Marie.

BUNKER. Huh. (*Then, uneasily*) What—what d'you s'pose the countess is doing?

BULGER. Gee, I feel sorry for that poor woman. Her controls keep her so busy she gets all worn out . . .

BUNKER. There's nothing in it for me, Max. I'm discouraged. There's a jinx on my trail—someone wished him on me when I was baptized.

(*Enter COUNTESS, back, softly—her eyes bandaged.*

BULGER *signals her entrance to BUNKER.*)

BULGER. (*To BUNKER.*) Sh-sh; let her do the talkin' . . . Don't give her no clues—see?

COUNTESS. (*Advancing slowly.*) Strange—there's two presences in this room. Mr. Bulger, yes—but I feel a more powerful presence—a hos-tile presence . . .

BULGER. (*To BUNKER.*) The controls steer her around—never bumps into nothin'—won'erful.

COUNTESS. Strange—the cur'nts are confusing. Ha—the cur'nts grow clearer—clearer . . . I see a B—a big B—Mr. Bean is with us. I might have known it was Mr. Bean. From the first—his hostile personality—has troubled my vision . . .

BULGER. Get that, kid?

COUNTESS. (*Shudders, nervous.*) My controls are crowding around me—out of the darkness . . . Oh. (*Points at BUNKER, who recoils.*) There's a mighty Fate in store for you. Pumps an'—an'—Power. You are not what you seem.

BUNKER. (*Gasps.*) Not—not what I seem? (*To BULGER.*) Is that what she said? Countess—go on—go on.

COUNTESS. (*As before.*) Emperor . . . Oh—oh. He's tryin' to communicate . . .

BULGER. (*To BUNKER.*) He's her biggest control. He don't usually come unless it's awful important . . .

BUNKER. Sh-sh.

COUNTESS. Ha. I see a letter—Special Delivery—yellow envelope. Strange—a letter for Mr. Bean—from Chicago. But—am I betraying a confidence? No, I must speak . . . Mr. Bean—your letter is in Mr. Bulger's inside pocket.

BULGER. (*Jumping*) Gee. That's right, countess. (*Produces letter.*) See—kid—it's the letter you left behind you . . . (*BUNKER takes letter.*) I was bringin' it up to you . . .

BUNKER. My God.

COUNTESS. (*Sharply.*) Don't open that letter (*BUNKER drops it to table; COUNTESS grabs it.*) Mr. Bean—there's something in this letter—will change your whole life . . .

BUNKER. Now what.

BULGER. (*As BUNKER starts to speak.*) Sh-sh.

COUNTESS. (*Places envelope to her forehead*) It's from your aunt—your uncle's dead—your trustee—he speculated with money your poor mother lef' you—but he lost it all . . .

BUNKER. (*In disgust.*) Oh, he did, did he? News t' me. Never knew I had money.

BULGER. Sh-sh-sh . . .

COUNTESS. Your poor dear aunt had his life insured—to make restitution. Mr. Bean, there's a check for—for—ten thousand dollars—in that letter.

BUNKER. What! (*Starts to grab for letter.*)

BULGER. (*Seizing his arm.*) Wait a mo'. You'll scare her controls. (*BUNKER subsides.*)

COUNTESS. (*Returning to table.*) That leaves five thousand dollars still due you. But your poor

aunt says she's sendin' fifty shares of stock—and she hopes you'll accept it as payment in full.

BUNKER. (*In a dream.*) Ten thousand—stock—fifty shares.

COUNTESS. Fifty shares of—of Federal Express.

BUNKER. (*Jumping.*) Federal Express.

COUNTESS. And your poor aunt says she hopes you'll save your money and turn your talents to the express business. The letter's singed "Effectuationately, Aunt Clara—P.S. It has rained hard for two days."

BUNKER. (*Gasping.*) Ten—thousand—Federal—Max.

BULGER. Some—epistle—bo.

BUNKER. (*Springing up*) Countess. Gimme that let . . .

BULGER. (*Quickly, at BUNKER'S ear. Crosses to BUNKER R. of table.*) Now's your chance, kid. Ask her who you was before you was Bunker Bean

COUNTESS. (*Puts letter down behind globe and takes up pad and pencil which she lays before BUNKER*) Write it down—fold it up tightly—since you will no longer be denied . . .

(BUNKER *nods, and writes his question on the pad, holding it below the edge, then he tears top sheet from pad and folds it up tightly.*)

BUNKER. (*Tremulously.*) O.—O.K., Countess.

COUNTESS. (*Taking up the pad.*) Press the question to your forehead—thus. (*Presses pad to her forehead.*) Now—concentrate. Concentrate. Go into silence.) BUNKER *obeys—shuts his eyes tight and concentrated.*)

COUNTESS. Don't you dare open your eyes. (*Swiftly consults the little pad in her hands.*)

COUNTESS. (*In hollow tone—seating herself L. of*

table) He's ready—Impreator's ready. Open your eyes . . . (BUNKER obeys. COUNTESS sits at table, passes her hand over pad and slowly scrawls upon it.)

COUNTESS. Oh, he's directing every movement. Oh . . . It's not my hand that's writing—it's his.

BULGER. Get that, kid?

BUNKER. Ss-sh.

COUNTESS. (*Pushes pad across to BUNKER.*) May we know your question.

BUNKER. (*Tremulously*) Max—you tell her . . .

BULGER. M' frien' Bean asked who he was befor he was jest—m' frien' Bean.

COUNTESS. (*Removes bandage from her eyes.*) Oh, I felt that. Someone great. You've had your day. May we know . . .

BUNKER. (*Reads from pad; awe-struck.*) "The last time you were Napoleon Bonaparte." (*A pause, then softly*) Napoleon—Emperor of France. (*Seems suddenly to expand, his eyes flash.*) Napoleon. (*With an imperious gesture.*) Gimme that letter.

BULGER. (*Draws letter from beneath crystal and hands it to BUNKER.*) Sure.

BUNKER. (*Devouring letter.*) . . . um . . . "P.S. It has rained hard for two days." Max—it's all true—every word. (*Flutters check before him.*) Look.

BULGER. (*Blinking.*) Dassn't. I feel dead.

COUNTESS. (*Chanting with clasped hands, has eyes on BUNKER.*) Napoleon. Destroyer of men and nations.

BUNKER. (*Uneasily.*) Destroyer . . . ?

BULGER. Say. Some smasher. An' some home-wrecker—they tell me.

COUNTESS. Ah, Mr. Bean—many's the fair

woman you've conquered, and spurned, and trampled beneath your feet.

BUNKER. Conquered? Spurned? Trampled? Fair women?—women? Napoleon?

BULGER. Why, kid, when it came to classy little dames there was nothing to it. He ate 'em alive.

BUNKER. Napoleon—ate 'em?

BULGER. Sure.

BUNKER. Me?

COUNTESS. And you'll do it again—again—and again. Us poor women'll be dirt beneath your chariot wheels—when you rise from obscurity to power . . .

BUNKER. (*His face falling.*) Max, did you hear her? When I rise from obscurity? Like Napoleon, she means—that's what he did, Max . . .

BULGER. Did he. Well, say. He sure was some little upstart.

BUNKER. Upstart? Upstart. You're right, Max—that's all Napoleon was—just an upstart. That's all I am. Probably I'm paying up now for the sins I sinned . . . (*Goes for his hat on cosy croner, R.*)

COUNTESS. (*Gasping.*) Mr. Bean—you're not leaving us—like this . . .

BUNKER. (*Mournfully.*) Oh, I know it isn't your fault I was only an upstart—but I'm discouraged, countess. It isn't what I hoped for—I'm not satisfied . . . (*Starts to go.*)

COUNTESS. (*With a note of anguish.*) Wait. He's coming.

BULGER. (*Puzzled.*) Who's coming'?

COUNTESS. My friend—Professor Balthazar—the greatest astrologer in the world.

(*At door, back. Opens door. Enter Quietly BALT
HAZAR.*)

BUNKER. (*Seizing BULGER's arm.*) D'ye hear that, Max? The greatest astrologer in the world.

BULGER. (*Sourly.*) Sure—let's go home.

BUNKER. Now? Max, I'm not satisfied—being an upstart, I'm going further back. (*COUNTRESS gives an audible sigh of relief.*)

BALTHAZAR. (*Solemnly*) Most—amazing. Most astounding . . . Countess Casanova, something impelled my footsteps here to-night. (*Fastens his eyes again on BUNKER. Impressively*) The opportunity I have been seekin' for years—stands before me. I must—disclose secret matters—no third party should overhear . . . (*Bows to COUNTRESS.*) Pardon me, madam—I must ask you to leave us, (*He glares at BULGER.*) You, too, my young friend.

BULGER. (*Suspiciously.*) Go on. M' frien' Bean an' me sticks together.

BALTHAZAR. (*To BULGER in a terrible voice.*) Young man—I have a sacred mission to perform. Beware—and—h'm—withdraw. (*Points a trembling finger at door R.*)

COUNTRESS. (*Anxiously.*) C'mon, Max, do.

BUNKER. (*At BULGER's ear, hissing.*) Beat it—can't you. This is—my affair.

BULGER. (*Crossly.*) O K. kid,—suit y'self. (*Picks up his hat and crosses E., but stops by Prof. BALTHAZAR, and turns to BUNKER again.*) But take it from me. When you're playing the countess—you're playin' safe . . . (*Glares at BALTHAZAR.*) Sec. (*Goes R. quickly followed by the COUNTRESS. His voice raised in anger, off.*) COUNTRESS hastily shuts door, closing herself and BULGER out, and leaving BUNKER and BALTHAZAR alone.)

BALTHAZAR. You observed his impudence? An' my—contempt? Good. (*Points to chair below table.*) Not a word. The past of your soul lies bare before me. Sit there. (*BUNKER obeys—*

sitting anxiously on outer edge of chair). (*Indulgently*) The countess is a good woman—but she has her—h'm—limitations. She works in—h'm—semi-darkness. I work in the light. (*Lights on.*) And why? Because I seek the light. My clients seek the light. And—they receive the light. (*BUNKER starts to speak.*) Not a word. I see it all . . . I see your past. (*He holds BUNKER'S eye a moment.*) The pomp and glitter of a throne. You ascend to it over the bodies of countless men. Power through blood. I cannot get the name under which you ruled—I see an N—No. (*Snaps fingers.*) The cries of your victims drown it. Horror piles upon horror.

BUNKER. (*Leaning forward, tense—his voice uncertain.*) Horrors—that's just the way I feel about it . . .

BALTHAZAR. The name. The name.

BUNKER. (*Breathlessly.*) Never mind that name. Let it go. I—I don't know it. Go on back—further.

BALTHAZAR. A statesman. The city is . . . (*Snaps his fingers.*) Venice . . . He is plotting the assassination of a Doge . . .

BUNKER. (*Gasps.*) Horrors.—I've had enough of all that battle an' killings. I don't like it. Isn't there something else? (*Knits hands together.*)

BALTHAZAR. (*Giving BUNKER a single sharp, impatient glance.*) Oh—now I see your first appearance on this planet. (*BUNKER'S breath catches. Long pause. Snaps his fingers, then lets his eyes rest on BUNKER'S solemnly.*) An Egyptian king.

BUNKER. An Egyptian king. What kind of a king? One of those—fighters?

BALTHAZAR. No, a man of vast power, but no violence—a wise and good king.

BUNKER. Ah. That's what I want.

BALTHAZAR. Your place on the Nile is—magnificent. You are tall, handsome—aristocratic—and—h'm—brave. (*Quickly.*) But you will not make war—as you very properly detest all violence. So there is little to relate of your—h'm reign . . .

BUNKER. What was my name?

BALTHAZAR. (*Snaps his fingers*) Name, Name—Ram-tah.

BUNKER. (*Eagerly.*) Ram-tah. Can I read about me?

BALTHAZAR. (*Firmly.*) You cannot. He was the last of the—h'm—pre-dynastic era. Yes . . .

BUNKER. But—when did I pass on?

BALTHAZAR. At the age of eighty—deeply mourned. Your body was lovingly embalmed—and the mummy . . .

BUNKER. The mummy . . .

BALTHAZAR. The mummy laid in the royal sepulchre . . . (*His voices sinks.*) I see it now—lying there beneath the sands—calm and majestic. (*BUNKER draws in his breath sharply.*) Ah—my young friend . . . (*Rivets his eyes upon BUNKER.*) For you—for you—to gaze upon that mummy . . . (*Sighs deeply and spreads his hands.*)

BUNKER. (*Speaking with difficulty.*) Professor—it almost seems—as if—as if that might—make me believe in myself—make me climb right up to the top . . .

BALTHAZAR. (*Thrillingly.*) Why, man—could but you suppose—that regal form—you would rise—you would soar—you would reach the heights . . . (*Pause.*)

BUNKER. (*Trying for a long breath*) Oh. What wouldn't I give to—to own that—that mummy.

BALTHAZAR. (*Quickly.*) Ah—what would you give, my young friend? (*Rises.*) But of course, humanly, it would be impossible.

BUNKER. Why—if you're sure it's there . . .

BALTHAZAR. (*Smilingly.*) My dear sir, you descend to the material world. As one practical man to another—simply because it would take more money than you can afford.

BUNKER. (*Indignant.*) How do you know?

BALTHAZAR. True—I do not know. But—pardon the bluntness—can you afford it?

BUNKER. (*Recklessly*) What'd it cost? That's all.

BALTHAZAR. H'm—h'm . . . (*Overcome by emotion, walks away and returns.*) There's the labor and—the risk . . . Of course my agents at Cairo won't work without remuneration. But, no—no. It would require an enormous sum. (*Steps close to BUNKER, eyeing him.*) Now, f'r instance—a thousand dollars . . . (*Pauses; BUNKER doesn't wince.*) Wouldn't any more than start the work. Two thousand—(*same business*)—would further it some . . . Three thousand—(*same business*)—might see it pretty well advanced. Four—(*same business*)—might prove our chances—and five thousand . . .

BUNKER. Five?

BALTHAZAR. (*Quickly*) Yes, five—I think—should put the thing through.

BUNKER. (*Draws a long breath, his face clears.*) Fine and dandy. Go ahead, professor.

BALTHAZAR. (*Laboring under strong emotion, which he tries to keep in control.*) There must be a payment down . . .

BUNKER. How much?

BALTHAZAR. Say—h'm—a thousand . . .

BUNKER. (*Doubtfully,*) 'Snuff.

BALTHAZAR. Well, perhaps not enough.

BUNKER. I'll give you two to-morrow. Give you the rest when you get . . . (*Gulping.*) When you get *it* here.

BALTHAZAR. (*Seizing BUNKER's hand in both his.*) You move me, I confess—I will undertake it.

BUNKER. How long will it be?

BALTHAZAR. I shall give orders by cable—a month, possible—if all goes well. One moment, my young friend. (*Enters COUNTESS R.E. BALTHAZAR seats himself L. of table and writes.*)

BUNKER. (*Softly.*) Napoleon—Ram-tah—wise and good . . . A king.

BALTHAZAR. Now just sign this little memo—my young friend. It says you agree to pay me—two thousand dollars—h'm—to-morrow.

BUNKER. (*Brightly.*) Right you are. (*Sits R. of table and signs paper.*) Always best to be business-like, I say. There. (*Rises, hands paper to BALTHAZAR. Grapss his hand.*) You don't know what you've done for me.

BALTHAZAR. I did the best I could. (*BUNKER turns, sees COUNTESS.*)

BUNKER. Ah, Countess. (*Swings her hand.*) You don't know what you've done for me.

COUNTESS. (*Graciously.*) I wish I could have done more.

BUNKER. (*At door R.*) Yes, thank you—thank you. I—I'm a changed man. (*Goes.*)

COUNTESS. Ha, ha, he fell for it.

BALTHAZAR. (*Sinking into chair L. of table.*) Well—anything loose in the house?

COUNTESS. Couple bottles beer . . . (*Calls.*) Mira. (*Sits R. of table. Enter MIRA, back, with bottles and glasses on tray.*)

MIRA. (*Bringing them down.*) I got it—I got it . . . (*Business.*)

CURTAIN

ACT II

SCENE II: TIME: *A month has passed.*

SCENE: BUNKER'S *bachelor apartments, Morning-side Heights.*

DISCOVERED: *'Enter BUNKER, L.C., ushering in the Greatest Pitcher in the world. BUNKER is a changed man—has become an "advanced dresser," suit of black-and-white checks, not loud, but natty. Necktie of red; yellow and green diagonal stripes. Scarf pin. Yellow gloves. Whippy walking stick. Everything to match. His shoulders seem broader; he actually looks taller.*

The Greatest Pitcher is a tall, clean-cut man, carries himself with a due sense of his own dignity, and is also an "advanced dresser" after BUNKER'S heart.

BUNKER. It's all right, Mr. Matthews, come right in.

PITCHER. Say, Mr. Bean, nice little box you've got here.

BUNKER. Suits me. Fact is, m' friend, Max Bulger, happened to know you lived in this house—when you're in town. That settled me. Been hopin' to meet you somehow ever since I moved in.

PITCHER. (*Discovers his photo on mantel, pleased.*) Say—among those present—what?

BUNKER. (*Crossing C. excited.*) It don't do you justice—now I've seen you close.

PITCHER. (*Worried.*) Think not? I don't know. (*Brightens.*) Want me to autograph it for you?

BUNKER. Do.

PITCHER. (*Crosses to table. Scrawls his name across picture.*) To m' friend—Mr.—Bean—compliments of—Bud Matthews . . .

BUNKER. Gee. Will I put that under glass. (*Takes photo.*) Greatest left-handed pitcher the world has ever seen. (*Replaces it on mantel R.*) It's a gold frame for yours. (*Turns to PITCHER.*) Funny we never met before in the elevator. I—I didn't like to speak first.

PITCHER. (*Affably.*) Well, I'm k'nda shy m'-self. But I couldn't resist askin' you for the address of your tailor. (*Passes hand over BUNKERSS houlders, admiringly.*) I'm strong for the cut he gives you.

BUNKER. (*Grins*) Gee. I was wondering when you spoke to me who built your clothes. Distinguished, I call 'em—an' a bit different. (*Touches PITCHER's sleeve.*) Some cloth. That white line comes out great in the daytime. Oh—I see you got one of those patent neck capes that prevents wrinkling below the coat collar. Same here. An' a vestee.

PITCHER. (*Business.*) Goes with gold pins.

BUNKER. (*Business.*) Nach'ly. Adds dressiness. Say, that's some shirt.

PITCHER. (*With satisfaction.*) Canton silk—special weave.

BUNKER. (*Pulls up coat sleeve.*) Monogram?

PITCHER. (*Matching him.*) Sure. What's you line, Mr. Bean. Sporting int'rests?

BUNKER. Not exactly. Finance—you might

say. (*Waves his hand.*) Taking a day off. Nothing doing in the Street this morning. (*Brazenly.*) You in the box s'afternoon? (PITCHER *nods.*) Say, if I ever have a kid—know what? Nothing used but his left hand from the cradle up—and for toys—one League Ball an' a bat. That's all. Of course, I'll let him start with a light bat—naturally.

PITCHER. Right away.

BUNKER. I'm only afraid the managers'll get wise and not let him finish out his college course.

PITCHER. Like the game?

BUNKER. What else is there? I'm only keeping on in the Street till I put a certain deal through—Fed'ral Express—I don't mind telling you. Clean that up—then nothing but old Base B. Ball m'self—if money'll do it.

PITCHER. Fine. It's the one branch of the business where you don't have to treat your arm like a sick baby. (*Telephone rings.*)

BUNKER. (*Crosses to phone.*) 'Scuse me. (*At phone.*) Hey? Ah—Kennedy & Balch? How are you, Balch? Yep . . . (*Listens.*) Fed'ral Express selling off a bit, eh? Div'dend cut, eh? Pshaw What'd I care? Sure, I'll stick. (*Grabs out pocket check book and consults it.*) Say—pick me up a hundred more margins—will you? Well, then—shares. Call 'em anything you like. What? Inside information? Well, you see. I've got a sort of plan about the stock—yeh. (PITCHER *rises. Crossly.*) What 'd I care how "J.B." stands? Let him stand till his feet fall off. S'nothing 'me How'd I stand—that's the point. Get me? Goo' . . .

PITCHER. (*Quickly.*) Hol' on, Mr. Bean.

BUNKER. Wait a minute.

PITCHER. I've got an account with Kennedy & Balch m'self.

BUNKER. Have you? Gee, I didn't know that.

PITCHER. (*PITCHER grabs receiver.*) Balch? This is Bud Matthews—see? Buy me in a hundred—a—that Fed'ral Express stuff. Right, G'by.

BUNKER. (*Grandly.*) You won't regret this, Bud. Take it from me.

PITCHER. Well, Mr. Bean—you've done me one good turn, then maybe you'd do me another? I—(*bashfully*)—I was at Claremont th' other afternoon, an' I happened to notice you havin' tea with—with some ladies—an old lady—and two young ladies . . .

BUNKER. (*Swelling with pride.*) The Misses Breedes—you know, daughters of old J. B. Breede.

PITCHER. (*His face falling.*) Not "J. B." the traction magnate?

BUNKER. Sure. He's head a the concern I'm with temporarily . . . (*Offers PITCHER a cigar from humidor on table.*)

PITCHER. Oh, no, thanks—in that case—it's all off . . . (*Embarrassed.*) Well, of course, I didn't know. Fact is, one of those young ladies hit me pretty hard.

BUNKER. (*Suddenly very serious, placing humidor on table.*) Which one?

PITCHER. The tall girl.

BUNKER. (*With relief.*) Oh—Gwendolen. Big Sister—I call her.

PITCHER. Say, Mr. Bean—of course, there's nothin' doin'—but she's the only girl ever knocked me out of the box—first inning . . .

BUNKER. That's funny—like to meet her?

PITCHER. (*Jumping.*) Say—would I?

BUNKER. I'll fix it. The Flapper—that's Miss M'rie—'s a pal-a mine . . .

PITCHER. Congratulations.

BUNKER. Huh. (*Laughs scornfully.*) Not me,

not yet. I'm not interested in women—not that way. Got too much to do first. Can't be bothered . . .

PITCHER. I get you. Too ambitious, eh?

BUNKER. (*Delightedly.*) That's it. Kipling had the right dope. "He travels farthest who travels alone . . ."

PITCHER. (*Shakes his head.*) Maybe . . . (*Grins.*) But you looked kind of sick for a mo'—till I said which girl had me stalling.

BUNKER. (*Worried.*) Did I. (*Crosses R to mantel.*) Gee, I'll have to watch myself—I can't afford to get mooney—not for years yet . . .

PITCHER. Say, Mr. Bean—take it from me. If the little dame wants you—she'll land you.

BUNKER. (*Frowning*) Huh. A girl can't make a man propose . . .

PITCHER. (*Grinning, crosses R. to B.*) Since when? Say, if you can fix that little thing for me . . .

BUNKER. Sure. (*Then suddenly.*) Oh, gee, I forgot. Gwen's engaged.

PITCHER. Hell. An' me in the box s'afternoon. Good night. (*Drops in chair.*)

BUNKER. He's only a Lizzie boy. Maybe you could cut him out . . .

PITCHER. Society chappy? Me cut him out—eh? With "J.B.'s" daughter . . . (*Groans.*) Nix. I guess I'm up against it.

(*Door bell rings. BUNKER goes to door and opens it. Enter BULGER L.C.*)

BULGER. Hello, Bunker.

BUNKER. Hello, Max.

BULGER. (*Entering, to BUNKER.*) Sorry to be the undertaker—but the funeral's on.

BUNKER. (*His face falling.*) Funeral?

BULGER. Sure thing. The old man telephoned just after you left. Some language. You could hear his foot hurting him over the phone. Doctor says he can't go down to the office for a week. He's goin' to wall you up alive in his family vault—up the Hudson. The automobile hearse'll be around here at twelve—an' you're to pack for three days. (*Suddenly recognizes the GREATEST PITCHER and gasps.* Ah—Gee-eg-egscuse . . .

BUNKER. (*Rising to the occasion.*) Shake hands with m' friend Bud Matthews—Max Bulger—pal a mine.

PITCHER. (*Grasping BULGER's limp hand*) That goes double for any pal—a Mr. Bean's.

BULGER. (*Stammering*) G-gee—I—won't wash that hand—for a week.

BUNKER. (*Claps BULGER's shoulder.*) Max—everything's comin' my way nowadays.

BULGER. I noticed that. (*Grins sourly.*) You won't be feelin' so cocky s'afternoon. The old man jailed me onc't up to his ancestral mansion—wow. You better get busy and pack.

BUNKER. (*Resentfully.*) Nice thing. I'm sick of being a wage-slave. You wait. Don't the old man ever chuck business?

BULGER. J. B.? Not. Why, the dividend's been cut in Fed'ral Express. (*Winks.*) Him an' that gang are up to some foxy game. Say, you own some—a—that stuff. (*Grins.*) Tough luck, I wouldn't be in your shoes . . . (*PITCHER looks worried.*)

BUNKER. (*Airily.*) Hugh. I've got a sort-a kind of a plan about that stock . . . (*Telephone rings; BUNKER crosses to phone.*) I'm not worried. (*PITCHER looks relieved. Takes down receiver.*) H'lo? (*BUNKER listens at phone, gasps, stammers.*)

What? Y-you—d-don't mean . . . It's—here? Wh-hat, o-on the way? Here—any m-minute? Oh my God. (*Hangs up receiver, pale and trembling.*)

BULGER. I told you J. B.'s car'd be around.

BUNKER. Y-yes, that's it, Max—J.B.'s car—here any m-minute. (*Goes to him.*) Would you mind beatin' it, Max? I—I want just a word with m' friend Bud—before I'm sent up the river.

PITCHER. (*Startled.*) Up the river . . .

BULGER. Say, it strikes me that you're taking it damn hard.

BUNKER. I . . . (*Gulps.*) I'm disappointed that's all. (*Apart to MAX.*) Chase yourself, old man, will you? Favor t'me.

BULGER. (*Puzzled.*) You're a funny gink. (*Then with a shrug.*) Well, I'm on my way. S'long, Mr. Matthews . . . (*Goes up to door.*)

PITCHER. I'll have to beat it, too . . .

BUNKER. (*Quickly.*) Now—pl-please don't, Bud, I—I want to explain something . . .

PITCHER. (*Uneasily*) About Federal Express?

BUNKER. No, no—not exactly.

BULGER. Oh, say.

BUNKER. S'long, Max.

BULGER. (*His hand on knob.*) The Flapper called you up, too—right after the old man. (*Grins.*) Oh, you cuties. Can I hear bells? Ask me. Wake me up any time in the night an' ask me. (*Laughs unpleasantly and goes. Exit L.C.*)

PITCHER. See here, Mr. Bean—what was that about being sent up the river? Have you got a confession to make?

BUNKER. No. No, not like you mean. I—Bud, there's a big chance coming into my life—here any minute . . .

PITCHER. (*Severely.*) Been gettin' in trouble, eh?

BUNKER. Trouble? No—just the opposite. Something coming into my life—that . . . *(Pause.)* Bud—two months ago I was nobody—'fraid of everybody. Why, you'd never have looked at me—two months ago.

PITCHER. Pshaw.

BUNKER. That's right, but now—they can't keep me down, Bud. There—there's a reason

PITCHER. Well, I'm not askin' for any info'—but I don't see . . .

BUNKER. Bud, I—I want to confide in you—*(hesitates)*—some day.

PITCHER. *(Worried.)* Any time . . .

BUNKER. *(Seizes his hand and wrings it.)* Thank you, Bud. And—don't you get discouraged about Gwendolen. Because I'm back of you in that. You see—I've made a discovery—I've discovered that—*(Door bell rings.)* Oh—Lord! *(Hesitates and then goes back to door and opens it.)*

(Enter CASSIDY, janitor of the apartment; a bully Irishman, always a little the worse for liquor.)

CASSIDY. *(Within doorway.)* Misther Bane, there's a big box come f'r ye—ixpress. *(Steps into room.)* 'Twould be brackyback. Shall I open it for ye in the cellar?

BUNKER. No-no. Have 'em bring it up here.

CASSIDY. 'Tis a powerful big box . . .

(A single knock at hall door, which CASSIDY has left open. Enter PROFESSOR BALTHAZAR, L.C., high hat in hand.)

BALTHAZAR. *(Waving his hat, blandly.)* Good-day, my young friend. *(To CASSIDY.)* Now my

man—no excuses. See that box is handled carefully. (CASSIDY goes.)

BUNKER. (*Excitedly.*) Bud—this is Professor Balthazar—the biggest medium in the world . . . Shake hands with Bud Matthews, professor—the greatest pitcher the world's ever seen.

PITCHER. How are you, professor. I didn't catch your line?

BALTHAZAR. (*Haughtily.*) I'm a psych'c, sir—an adept—a yogi—a . . .

PITCHER. Oh, I get you. (*Makes passes with his hands.*) Spirits, eh? (*Crosses to C. Looks hard at BUNKER; shakes his head.*) Too bad.

BUNKER. What's that, Bud?

PITCHER. Nothing; I must be on my way: (*Goes to door, turns.*) Say, Mr. Bean, if I was you I . . .

BUNKER. (*His thoughts elsewhere.*) What—eh?

PITCHER. Oh . . . (*With a look of contempt at BALTHAZAR.*) I guess what I have on my chest can wait . . .

BUNKER. Well, drop in any time, Bud, when you're feeling lonesome. I won't forget what you asked me—about Gwendolen.

PITCHER. Fine. Maybe I can do you a good turn—when I get a chance. (*Glares at BALTHAZAR, smiles at BUNKER, and goes out. Exit L.C. BALTHAZAR shuts hall door softly after PITCHER, then comes forward stealthily.*)

BALTHAZAR. H'm—you couldn't get me to do it again for twice the money. The nervous strain I've been under. (*At BUNKER's ear.*) A custom-house detective was on our trail last night. H'm—but one of my men took care of him—at a dark corner . . .

BUNKER. (*Shuddering.*) He—he didn't . . .

BALTHAZAR. Oh, nothing serious. H'm—he'll

be as well as ever in a month or so. But I mustn't linger, my young friend—if you'll complete my—honor—arium . . .

BUNKER. Yes, yes—you've done your part. (*Sits at table and quickly writes check. Crosses R., gives to BALTHAZAR.*)

(*Loud noise of bumping from hall. Enter two groaning expressmen carrying a big coffin-like box.*)

CASSIDY. (*Following them.*) Mind that corner now, b'ys. (*Expressmen deposit box in middle of the room and wipe their brows.*) That there hall's choked with dust. Where will they put it, Mr. Bane?

BUNKER. Right here. (*Indicating a place up stage. Men deposit box and CASSIDY exits L.C.*)

BALTHAZAR. (*R. of BUNKER. To BUNKER.*) Pay the men liberally—and let them be on their way. (*BUNKER hands a dollar bill to each of the expressmen, who pocket the money without thanks and depart, grinning with satisfaction. BALTHAZAR follows them to door, turns.*) I bid you farewell. Here's the key. Oh, one thing more, my young friend—don't handle it too much, it might disintegrate. (*Goes, leaving hall door open. BUNKER runs to door and shuts it. Then he stands a second in silence, contemplating the box. A lump rises in his throat, he is forced to wipe his eyes.*)

BUNKER. (*Reverently.*) Ram-tah . . . (*Then with a gulp of satisfaction, he goes straight to box and unlocks the padlock which holds the lid and then with reverent hands lifts from the box a brightly painted and remarkably light mummy-case. Holding his breath, he carries the mummy case down stage R.C. and stands it up. He is motionless before it a moment, with bowed head—then passes his hands*

tenderly over the case, and finally removes the painted cover and leans it against the wall. The swathed mummy of Ram-tah now stands before him, majestic in death and wonderfully well preserved. The bearded face is a rich mahogany color. BUNKER stares at the Ram-tah, long and earnestly—then his breast heaves, his breath catches. Softly, in all reverence.) God—God, how I've changed. (The door bell rings sharply. BUNKER jumps as if shot from behind—looks wildly around. The bell rings again. Swiftly he opens the closet door, lifts the mummy in its case within closet, leans it upright against the back wall, returns for the cover and is about to replace it when the bell again sounds sharply three or four times. BUNKER gasps, leans the cover against wall at one side of the case, jumps back out of closet and locks the door. The bell again—a long ring. Leaving the key in the door, BUNKER turns and almost creeps to the hall door, opening it only a crack.)

FLAPPER. (Clearer from hall.) I just perfectly knew you must be in here—because Mr. Cassidy said so.

BUNKER. (Falling back, startled.) Y-y-you.

(Enter the FLAPPER, calmly, closing the door after her.)

FLAPPER. (Coming forward, happily) Of course, I've just been dying to know what your rooms are like—ever so long. Because I think rooms always look more like people than they do themselves—don't you? (Looking around her.) So I'm perfectly going to stare and snoop and everything.

BUNKER. (Following her about miserably) B-but—where's grandma? I—I've never seen you before without grandma.

FLAPPER. (Nodding.) That's just it. I knew

you'd feel just as I do. We've never had a chance to get better acquainted—have we?

BUNKER. (*Shocked.*) B-but—is'nt it kind of queer—I mean—you being here alone—with me?

FLAPPER. (*Perching on arm of morris-chair.*) I think it's the darlingest joke. (*Sits L.C. Gurgles.*) I just perfectly giggled myself into spasms all the way down. You know—they haven't the least idea where I am, at home—because when the car started for you—I just perfectly hopped into it.

BUNKER. B-but—what'll the folks say, if . . .

FLAPPER. (*Decidedly.*) Fiddle. It doesn't matter what they say, if . . . (*Meets BUNKER's eyes, with a frank, confiding little smile.*) Besides, woman has been emancipated and come into her own—and she can just perfectly do as she pleases. Granny agrees with me. What have you been unpacking?

BUNKER. (*Swallowing hard*) Oh—some—books and things . . .

FLAPPER. (*Nodding approval.*) I'm so glad you like good reading, because I perfectly love Robert Chambers—don't you. Where are they?

BUNKER. (*Embarrassed.*) In—in my bedroom.

FLAPPER. (*Points to closet door, back.*) In there?

BUNKER. (*Quickly*) No—no—(*points R.*) in there.

FLAPPER. (*Points to closet.*) Is that your bathroom, then?

BUNKER. (*Blushing.*) N-no.

FLAPPER. Kitchenette?

BUNKER. No . . .

FLAPPER. (*Frowning an instant.*) What is it? Anyone would think you were Bluebeard—and me your seventh wife. (*Smiles again.*) But of course—I'm perfectly not your seventh anything—am I?

Are you ready to start? Pops'll be perfectly furious if you're late. Not that it matters much. Because poor old Pops is perfectly furious anyway.

BUNKER. (*Groaning.*) Oh, and I—haven't even packed yet.

FLAPPER. (*Jumps to her feet clapping her hands*) Goody. Then I can help you. Bring your suitcase here and hand me your things—and I'll just perfectly put them in for you.

BUNKER. B-but I couldn't let you it—wouldn't be . . .

FLAPPER. (*Crosses R. to BUNKER.*) Of course it would. It's all settled and everything. No man ever knows how to pack. Granny says so. Oh, what a stunning tie. (*Straightens BUNKER'S tie and gives it a little pat.*)

BUNKER. Oh, that little old last year's tie. I never quite dared to wear it before. Do you think it too different?

FLAPPER. Oh, of course not. It perfectly does something to you.

BUNKER. Sure?

FLAPPER. (*Nodding*) I'm sure as sure. (*Frowning.*) But you're not wearing my suffrage badge—and you promised me.

BUNKER. (*Quickly.*) Always 'fraid I'll lose it somewhere—keep it in my bureau—safer . . .

FLAPPER. But you must wear it. It's perfectly no good in your bureau.

BUNKER. I—I'll get it right away. (*Goes to bedroom door.*)

FLAPPER. Don't forget your suitcase. (*Points again to closet.*) Are your things in there? (*Starts for closet.*)

BUNKER. (*Stammering.*) N-no—no. Nothing at all—empty closet—n-never use it . . .

FLAPPER. Why not?

BUNKER. (*Opens bedroom door*) D-don't know. D-doesn't appeal to me somehow, that's all. (*Pauses.*) I—I've got to change my suit.

FLAPPER. Well—don't be long. (*Goes to chair L.C., R. of table.*)

BUNKER. Wouldn't it be . . . Hadn't you—better wait—downstairs?

FLAPPER. Oh, splash. Silly. It just deliciously suits me right here. (*FLAPPER sits R. of table L.C.*)

BUNKER. If it just deliciously suits you right there—it just deliciously suits me to have you stay right there.

(BUNKER rolls his eyes wildly, then bolts into his bedroom and shuts the door. A key is heard to turn in lock on other side of door. The FLAPPER walks about the room, inspecting everything and humming happily to the accompaniment of the phonograph which she has started playing. At length she stops before closet door. FLAPPER glances toward bedroom—listens—then tries the handle of closet door. Finds it locked. Then—softly turns key in lock and opens the door Springs back from door, stiffling a scream as Ram-tah falls forward at her out of the closet. As the mummy strikes the floor its head breaks off, revealing the fact that it is stuffed with excelsior.)

FLAPPER. (*Gasping.*) Good gracious. I've just perfectly done it now.

BUNKER. (*Calls through closed door in great anxiety.*) What is it? What's wrong? I—I can't come out. My collar's off.

FLAPPER. (*Goes to bedroom door, quickly, calls.*) N-nothing's wrong; I almost perfectly killed myself falling over the old packing-case.

BUNKER. (*Within, much relieved.*) Oh—is that all.

FLAPPER. (*Indignantly.*) Well, you might say you're a wee bit sorry. Ouch.

BUNKER. I—I am . . . Be with you—half a minute.

FLAPPER. (*Turns hastily back.*) Oh . . . (*Lifts the trunk of Ram-tah and thrust it into closet, then collects his severed head.*) I suppose you're just perfectly some secret society stunt. (*Shudders.*) O—oh—I'm glad you're not a skeleton anyway. (*Rolls head in on closet floor, softly closes door and locks it. Bedroom door opens and BUNKER comes out, having changed his suit. He is carrying a closed suitcase.*)

BUNKER. Did you hurt yourself much?

FLAPPER. (*Rubbing her knees.*) I—I should say so. (*Smiles*) But it's better now. (*Clearing table.*) Just put that suitcase down and bring me your things. We must hurry.

BUNKER. Yes—we must. It's all packed. (*Takes up his hat.*)

FLAPPER. (*Disappointed.*) Oh, that isn't fair. Have you packed your collars?

BUNKER. Yes.

FLAPPER. Ties and socks—and things?

BUNKER. Yes.

FLAPPER. (*Hopefully.*) Toothbrush.

BUNKER. Yes. I put that in the very first thing.

FLAPPER. (*Her face falls.*) Oh—dear.

BUNKER. You—you'd better go down first, M-M'rie. (*Glances longingly towards closet.*)

FLAPPER. Oh. That's just perfectly the very first time you ever called me that—or—or anything. (*Takes his arm.*) Silly. We'll just darlingly go down together.

BUNKER. (*As they start toward hall door.*)
B-but. (*Door bell rings.*) Oh—Lord . . .

FLAPPER. (*Cocking up her chin.*) Fiddle. I'm not ashamed of being here—with you.

BUNKER. I'm not ashamed either.

FLAPPER. Open it . . . Oh, splash. Then I will. (*Opens hall door before BUNKER can stop her.*)

Enter the Greatest Pitcher in the world.

PITCHER. (*Halting astoundedly.*) Sorry to butt in, Mr. Bean—I was goin' to suggest a bite of lunch—then go up to the grounds together—but of course . . .

FLAPPER. (*Smiling a welcome.*) Oh—I know who you are. That's your photograph—*isn't it?* I perfectly recognized you. I'm Miss Breede—my father employs Mr. Bean. I just called to take him up home in the car . . .

BUNKER. Yes—that's all—just called—Miss Breede, let me present Mr. Bud Matthews—pal of mine.

FLAPPER. Oh, splash, silly. You are so slow. We just perfectly knew each other. I'm mad about baseball. Bunker's teaching me to talk it. He raves about you. What time is it?

PITCHER. (*Gasping.*) Half-past twelve . . .

FLAPPER. Oh—then we couldn't possible get home for lunch. That's splendid—because we can all just perfectly have lunch together. (*To BUNKER.*) We can drop Bud Matthews at the grounds on the way, you know—so that's all settled and everything.

PITCHER. Two's company, isn't it?

FLAPPER. I know. But Bunker says you're the greatest left-handed pitcher in the world—and

I want to ask you why you use your left hand and what a spit-ball is and all about it. (*To BUNKER.*) Come on . . .

BUNKER. (*Grandly.*) It's all right, Bud—old man. (*They start up.*)

FLAPPER. (*Suddenly stops.*) Oh, you've forgotten it again.

BUNKER. (*His thoughts on Ram-tah.*) No, I hadn't. What. You don't mean . . .

FLAPPER. Care? Of course I care. I want you to wear it. Always.

BUNKER. Wear . . .

FLAPPER. My suffrage badge, silly.

BUNKER. (*With relief.*) Oh—oh—must have slipped my mind somehow—I'll get it right away. (*Dashes into bedroom, taking suitcase with him.*)

FLAPPER. (*Goes to door.*) Fiddle. We perfectly must start. I'll ring the elevator bell. (*Retreats rapidly from door, seizing greatest pitcher's arm and dragging him down stage with her. In a whisper.*) Mr. Bud, Mr. Bud—wait a minute.

PITCHER. What is it?

FLAPPER. It's Gwen.

PITCHER. Gwen.

FLAPPER. My sister.

PITCHER. (*Starts for door.*) Gee. Where?

FLAPPER. Stop. She's snooping. (*On sudden thought.*) Mr. Bud—you let her in—and tell her Bunker started off with me long ago.

PITCHER. B-but . . .

FLAPPER. Oh, you'll think of something. It's all settled and everything. Wait . . . (*Before he can detain her, she runs into bedroom and shuts door. Door bell rings.*)

BUNKER. (*Off stage R.*) You mustn't come in.

PITCHER. Couldn't you wait long enough to introduce us. Oh, of course not.

(Greatest pitcher hesitates a second; then, with a sudden look of determination, goes to door and opens it. BIG SISTER sails in past him. He follows her down R. of her, admiration in his eyes.)

BIG SISTER. Who are you?

PITCHER. Matthews is my name. You're Miss Breede . . .

BIG SISTER. How do you know me?

PITCHER. I don't. I wish I did—unless you're willing to chance this as an introduction . . . (*His frank smile disarms her.*)

BIG SISTER. (*Struck by the big fellow's manly figure and pleasant face.*) But how do you know my name?

PITCHER. I saw you the other day—at Claremont—having tea with my pal—Mr. Bean. I could hardly wait to ask him. He—he promised me—I should meet you sometime. That makes this O.K., doesn't it?

BIG SISTER. (*Bursts out laughing.*) So you're a "pal" of Mr. Bean's. I might have guessed it. You . . . (*Laughs.*) You're almost as quaint as he is. (*Suddenly.*) By the way, where are they?

PITCHER. Who?

BIG SISTER. Don't pretend ignorance, Mr. . . .

PITCHER. Matthews—Bud Matthews . . .

BIG SISTER. (*The name means nothing to her.*) Mr. Matthews, Mr. Bean and my kid sister are up here somewhere—and they need a chaperone.

PITCHER. Oh, now I get you, Miss Breede. Too bad, you've missed them. They started off thirty minutes ago . . .

BIG SISTER. (*Sweetly.*) Oh, no, they didn't, Mr. Matthews. Father's car is still downstairs—and I asked the chauffeur . . .

PITCHER. (*Blankly,*) Oh—Gee. (*Laughs boyishly.*) I guess we're caught with the goods . . .

BIG SISTER. (*Triumphantly.*) Ha. M'rie'll catch it for this. The idea of her coming down here alone—where are they?

PITCHER. (*Nods toward bedroom.*) Hiding—in there.

BIG SISTER. Isn't that Mr. Bean's—bedroom?

PITCHER. Well, you see . . .

BIG SISTER. Oh, this is too much. When mother hears this . . . (*She starts for bedroom door.*)

PITCHER. (*Steps quickly between her and door.*) Wait a mo'—Miss Breede.

BIG SISTER. (*Indignantly.*) How dare you . . .

PITCHER. Now—don't get sore. Listen—you know it's all right. They heard your voice—and just ran to hide. Is—is your mother out there? (*Nods toward hall.*)

BIG SISTER. No. Mr. Whepple—my fiance. He's watching the elevator, if he isn't asleep.

PITCHER. Ah—fine. See here, Miss Breede—if you're engaged—you ought to understand. (*Points with thumb to bedroom door.*) Those two kids. That's all they are—kids. Love's young dream. Gee, I envy them—that's right. Come—we are just goin' to have lunch together—let's make it a party—on me, eh? What'd you say?

BIG SISTER. Really—I admire—your nerve.

PITCHER. (*With boyish smile.*) Promise me you won't tease 'em—Miss Breede. Y'know—they're just at the sensitive stage . . .

BIG SISTER. (*Disarmed—smiling back*) You're wonderful. I begin to think better of Mr. Bean—if you're a—(*giggles*)—"pal" of his.

PITCHER. Fine. (*Throws open bedroom door—*
BUNKER and FLAPPER, who have been leaning

against it, stumble forward together to the room.)
It's all right—everybody.

BIG SISTER. Marie.

PITCHER. Miss Breede and her—fiance—are going to join us—we'll have a jolly bite of lunch together.

BIG SISTER. M'rie, how undignified.

PITCHER. Now don't let's waste any more conversation—till we can all take it easy . . .

(At this moment, ERNEST WHEPPLE, a sleepy, stupid-looking scion of the 400, appears in hall doorway.)

ERNEST. I say, Gwen, old girl—I'm tired watchin' that lift.

FLAPPER. Hello, Ernie. We're all going to lunch together. Come in and meet Mr. Matthews. (ERNEST lounges forward—see *Greatest Pitcher* and stops dead, his jaw dropping.)

ERNEST. Oh—I say. Never hoped to have the honor of meetin' you, sir . . .

BIG SISTER. (Looking puzzled—to *Greatest Pitcher*.) Would you mind telling me who you are, anyway? (*Greatest Pitcher* grins.)

BUNKER. (Horried.) What. You don't know?

FLAPPER. Gwen.

ERNEST. That's a good one.

PITCHER. (Offering arm.) Let us lead the way. Miss Breede—this is our party.

ERNEST. (Doubtful.) I say. Your party?

(BIG SISTER hesitates a second; looks at ERNEST, then at *Greatest Pitcher*—laughs suddenly and takes *Greatest Pitcher's* arm.)

BIG SISTER. Come along, Mr. Matthews. I'm

sure you're not a duke—so you must be a millionaire . . . (*They pass out.*)

BUNKER. (*Disgustedly.*) Millionaire.

PITCHER. I'll tell you on the way down. (*PITCHER and BIG SISTER exit L.C., arm in arm.*)

ERNEST. (*Following.*) But hang it all, Gwen—you promised me . . . (*ERNEST exits L.C.*)

FLAPPER. (*Grabs BUNKER'S arm and gets him as far as the door L.C.*)

BUNKER. (*Breaking from her.*) You go on ahead—M'rie. I—I've forgotten something . . .

FLAPPER. (*Pats suffrage badge on his lapel.*) No, you haven't, Bunker.

BUNKER. Yes, yes, I have, M'rie. No man ever knows how to pack. I—I've forgotten my razor.

FLAPPER. As if that mattered.

BUNKER. (*Feeling his cheek.*) Oh, I simply mustn't leave without my razors—please . . .

FLAPPER. Well—don't be long. (*Goes out hall door L.C.*)

BUNKER. (*Quickly shuts hall door. Then murmuring.*) "Ram-tah," (*Runs to closet door, and just starts to open it for a last look, when the FLAPPER flings open the hall door again, crying out as she sees him at closet door.*)

FLAPPER. (*Wildly.*) Bunker.

BUNKER. (*BUNKER has shut closet door instantly as FLAPPER has opened the hall door. He turns key in lock, picks up traveling bag as FLAPPER drags him off stage L.C.*) Ah—ah . . .

QUICK CURTAIN

ACT III.

*"I've got the right to choose the father
of my own children."*

TIME: *Afternoon of the same day, about 2:00.*

SCENE: *Morning room of POPS' mansion, Westchester County.*

DISCOVERED: *The WASTER. He is curled up in melancholy mood on the davenport smoking cigarettes and reading a newspaper. Enter from hall L., JULIA, his mother, dressed for shopping.)*

JULIA. (*Much annoyed.*) Clarence, where is Marie?

WASTER. (*Without looking up.*) Slightest idea.

JULIA. Well, I want her.

WASTER. (*Mutters.*) You can have her.

JULIA. Imagine her going out to lunch somewhere without informing me or anybody. She's growing far too independent.

WASTER. Take it out on granny, not me. It's her fault. (*Up around R.C.*) Votes for women. (*To window C.*)

JULIA. I've asked everybody but your father. (*Points to den.*) Your father is there?

WASTER. Better let him stay there. He's been expecting young Boston Beans since before lunch. He's wild.

JULIA. Oh, I wish the poor man didn't have gout. It sounds well, but it's so awful for the family. (*Starts to den, then stops, decided not to risk it.*) Well, I can't wait—I shall punish Marie for this. (*Going.*)

WASTER. Say, Mops.

JULIA. Yes . . .

WASTER. I'm a bit strapped. Let me have a hundred, won't you?

JULIA. Certainly not, I gave you fifty dollars yesterday.

WASTER. Yes, but I spent that two weeks ago.

JULIA. (*At hall door.*) Tell Marie I'm very angry with her.

WASTER. Say, Mops, if you'll give me a hundred, I'll spank her for you.

JULIA. Don't be vulgar, Clarence. (*Exits L.C. up-stairs.*)

BUNKER. (*Entering with FLAPPER and LOUIS with suitcase from R.C., happily.*) Glad you noticed that, Marie. Fact is, always make a point of speaking to every policeman I pass nowadays. How are you, officer, or just wave my hand, see? Fine fellow, of course, there was a time when I wouldn't have dared . . . (*Sees WASTER*) Oh. How are you, Mr. Clarence? (*Slowly waving hand.*)

WASTER. (*Ignoring BUNKER*) H'lo, Chubbins.

FLAPPER. (*To chauffeur, ignoring WASTER.*) Take Mr. Bean's suitcase up to the blue bedroom . . .

LOUIS. Yes, miss.

WASTER. (*To FLAPPER, protesting.*) Blue bedroom. I say, but Ernie's stopping here to-night . .

FLAPPER. (*To chauffeur, with emphasis.*) To the blue room, and Louis, unpack it at once.

LOUIS. Yes, miss.

BUNKER. Yes, and Louis, I'll make it all right with you.

LOUIS. Yes, sir. (*Exits upstairs L.C.*)

WASTER. (*To FLAPPER.*) Where've you been.

BUNKER. Been? Oh, little old lunch, Claremount. Tea and things . . .

WASTER. (*To FLAPPER.*) Well, Mops is crazy. I've a good mind to tell on you.

FLAPPER. Snoop cat. You can't just perfectly tell.

WASTER. Would, if she hadn't turned me down for a measly hundred . . .

BUNKER. (*Magnificently.*) I can let you have a hundred or so . . .

WASTER. (*Taken aback.*) What.

BUNKER. If it's a convenience . . .

WASTER. Convenience, whew, have you been robbing a bank?

BUNKER. (*Cheerfully.*) Oh, no, just shearing a few lambs, you might say. Bulls and bears, Wall Street, Federal Express . . .

WASTER. Federal . . .

FLAPPER. Why, Pops knows all about Fdeeral Express.

BUNKER. Oh, not quite all—I mean—I beg your pardon.

FLAPPER. Poor old Pops. (*To CLARENCE.*) Isn't Bunker perfectly splendid.

WASTER. (*Puzzled a moment.*) Bunker, oh . . .
(*Then to BUNKER.*) Well, really, old top, since you ask me, I am a bit strapped. Only need it a few days, you know . . . (*BUNKER takes out check book.*)

FLAPPER. Don't do it, Bunker, he'll just throw it away.

BUNKER. Plenty more where this comes from.

WASTER. I say, I'd be awfully obliged . . .

BUNKER. Nothing less consequence. (*Writes check.*) Three hundred see you through?

WASTER. You're a king. (*Takes check.*)

BUNKER. Oh, well, can't help it, runs in my family.

WASTER. (*Pocketing check.*) Wish it ran in mine. I've got a bit on the game s'afternoon.

FLAPPER. Clarence.

WASTER. May be able to square this to-morrow.

BUNKER. Gee, I'd rather get to the game than be President. (*Groans.*) No chance, and my friend Bud Matthews in the box, at that.

WASTER. (*Impressed.*) D'you know Bud Matthews?

BUNKER. Do I? Sure, he's a pal a mine.

WASTER. You're a little bit of all right. Well, anything I can do for you—any time.

BIG SISTER. (*Re-entering from garden R.C.*) Come and make up doubles, Clare . . .

WASTER. Hello.

BIG SISTER. Ernie and Phyllis are waiting.

WASTER. Can't—just off to game . . .

BIG SISTER. Now don't be nasty. (*Go to him.*) Ernie's no good. You can make your expenses for a month out of Ernie. (*CLARENCE frowns.*) Of course I have to play with him, because we're engaged . . .

WASTER. All right, then, if he'll put up something worth while, you're on.

BIG SISTER. You can't afford to miss any tricks with the high cost of loafing all over the place . . .

WASTER. Oh, Gwen . . .

ERNEST. (*Entering R.C.*) Gwen—Gwen, old girl. I say, are you still mussy with me?

BIG SISTER. (*Disgusted.*) Do I look mussy?

ERNEST. No, but you sound mussy. That's worse. Gwen, I never said you flirted with him.

BIG SISTER. You did so, Ernest Whepple. You said I flirted with a professional ball player, just like a chorus girl.

BUNKER. (*Shocked, to FLAPPER.*) Oh, did you hear him say that?

ERNEST. (*To BIG SISTER.*) I never. I said—nobody but a chorus girl would.

BIG SISTER. And of course, Ernie, dear, you know all about chorus girls.

BUNKER. She didn't mean that—does she . . .

FLAPPER. Silly.

ERNEST. (*To WASTER.*) Clare, my boy, you know I don't run with anybody but Gwen. Put in a word for a chap . . .

BIG SISTER. As if I'd take Clare's word for anything.

WASTER. Thank you, sweetness. (*Yawns, lounges off, exit window R.C.*)

ERNEST. Mr. Bean, did I say Gwen flirted like a chorus girl?

BUNKER. Well, not—exactly.

BIG SISTER. (*Triumphantly.*) There, you see, that proves it.

ERNEST. Did I, Marie?

FLAPPER. Oh, splash, Ernie, it perfectly doesn't matter what you said.

BIG SISTER. Besides, if I want to flirt like a chorus girl, I don't have to ask your permission.

ERNEST. Oh, Gwen.

BIG SISTER. We're not married yet, darling, not nearly . . . (*Exit L., below stairs.*)

ERNEST. Gwen. Oh, I say, I asked you not to get mussy, Gwen . . . (EXIT *at window*, R.C.)

FLAPPER. Poor old Ernie, he won't last long.

BUNKER. Won't he? Fine. I wish Bud could hear that.

FLAPPER. Oh, wasn't that little old lunch perfectly ducky. And I know now how many lumps you take, and everything. (*Points to den.*) You'd better hurry right in there, or Pops will be murdering someone. We're awfully late . . .

BUNKER. (*Nervously.*) Is his foot very bad?

FLAPPER. Oh, no, I think it's mostly his language. (*Starts of L.*) I'll see your room's all right . . .

POPS. (*Just then door opens of den, and POPS appears, hobbling with cane; savagely.*) Where tne devil's that boy of mine, hasn't he . . . (*Sees BUNKER.*) Oh, take letter, N. J. Haskins, Cin'nati, dear sir . . . (*Continues without break, hobbles across to easy chair. BUNKER snatches paper and pencil from table and drops into striaght chair at upper end of table.*) Replying yours 23rd instant would say ouch, damn that foot, don't take that . . . (*To FLAPPER.*) What devil you standing there for listening me swearing—no place for you—get out . . . (*FLAPPER gives BUNKER a sympathetic look and vanishes, slipping off through hall, laughing, and upstairs.*) Where was I . . .

BUNKER. (*Patiently.*) . . . and would say.

POPS. Haugh. Regarding Federal 'Spress hope to have more definite an' interesting news for you within week, your truly . . . (*Takes out some sheets of paper from pocket.*) Here . . . (*Hands them to BUNKER.*) Copy these for me, had to write 'em out myself. Humiliating—where you been all day, had'ye lunch?

BUNKER. (*Quickly.*) Oh, yes, sir, Claremont—tea and things . . .

POPS. Take letter to W. W. Cummings, San Cisco, dear sir. Tea and things, cocktails, eh. Bad for you, m' boy.. Start dieting young—you'll live longer . . .

BUNKER. (*Without freshness.*) Yes, sir, but I'd rather live shorter and better.

POPS. What's you say . . .

BUNKER. Letter, W. W. Cummings . . .

POPS. 'Snuff. Conditions market present impossible, any action part . . . (*To BUNKER.*) Who ja lunch with—alone?

BUNKER. No, sir.

POPS. Any action on my part—spending your money on girls; eh?

BUNKER. Oh, no, Mr. Breede, Bud Matthews wouldn't let me.

POPS. Who wouldn't. Bud Matthews, not the Bud . . .

BUNKER. Why, there's only one . . .

POPS. Any action on my part, your truly . . . (*To BUNKER.*) He's in the box this afternoon . . .

BUNKER. Yes, sir.

POPS. Haugh. Damn fool doctor won't let me go to game. So you know Bud Matthews . . .

BUNKER. (*Heartily.*) Sure, beg pardon sir; Bud's a pal a mine.

POPS. You don't say. (*Stares, scratches head.*) Know Bud Matthews, puzzle to me . . . (*Rises.*) Ouch, damn. Rush letters. (*Hobbles back to den.*) BUNKER *picks up typewriter and follows him.*

POPS. (*Turning on him.*) Put 'at down. Work out here. Can't stand noise to-day. Can't stand anything. (*Goes into den, muttering curses, slams door.* Enter LOUIS from hall L.C.)

BUNKER. Do I know Bud Matthews!

LOUIS. (*Down R.C. to BUNKER.*) Yes, sir.

BUNKER. Yes, sir, what?

LOUIS. Yes, sir.

BUNKER. Oh, you're Louis, are you?

LOUIS. Yes, sir.

BUNKER. Oh, I see. (*Taking roll of bills from pocket and giving one to LOUIS.*)

LOUIS. Thank you, sir. (*Going.*)

BUNKER. Nothing of less consequence.

LOUIS. Yes, sir. (*Exit to hallway. BUNKER goes to table L.C., find a paper beside the typewriter and is about to set to work when the buzzer on house interphone sounds. Looks around puzzled. Buzzer sounds again. He locates it, hesitates, then goes to phone, takes receiver down gingerly.*)

BUNKER. Hello. (*Then in relief.*) Oh, Marie, not a regular phone, eh. Between rooms? Distinguished, I call it. Yes, he's gone in, oh, not so worse, sure two pillows suit me all right, only use one but I've no objections to the other lying round, goody-bye . . . (*Hang up, cock eye at phone, then return to work. Pound keys; GRANDMOTHER the demon enters from hall. Goes directly to down-stage window seat R. and seats herself. BUNKER watches her cross, then quickly removes suffrage badge from lapel, and stuffs it in his pocket. Rise and she sits herself.*)

GRANDMA. No ceremony with me, young man. Keep right on with your work. I like to watch it. (*Sharply. BUNKER sits and thumps keys, squirming uncomfortably in chair. She produces cigarette, lifts one foot and lights match. BUNKER looks up, startled, she lights cigarette, he meeting her eyes bows head quickly over machine, rattles at keys furiously. Enter FLAPPER from hall.*)

FLAPPER. Don't let me disturb you. (*Over L.*

curls up in chair, fastens eyes on embarrassed BUNKER. Suddenly.) Oh, you've lost your badge.

BUNKER. Hang it . . . *(Quickly.)* No, no, that is, just keep in my pocket while I'm working—safer.

GRANDMA. Uh . . .

BUNKER. *(Meets her eye.)* Beg pardon . . .

GRANDMA. Go right ahead, young man, just as if I wasn't here. *(Pounds keys desperately, then draws letter from machine.)*

FLAPPER. There, now he's through, Grandma.

GRANDMA. *(Crisply.)* How old are you . . .

BUNKER. *(Trying to be jauntly.)* Let me see, I'm 23, last Tuesday. *(GRANDMA and FLAPPER nod approval to each other. BUNKER hastily puts a fresh sheet into typewriter.)*

GRANDMA. Smoke . . .

BUNKER. *(Trying to start letter throughout scene)*
No.

GRANDMA. Drink.

BUNKER. No.

GRANDMA. Got any bad habits, ever take drugs.

BUNKER. *(Rattled.)* I, well, I used to take sulphur and molasses every spring, but I never kept it up after I left home.

GRANDMA. Uh—how's your health. Ever been sick much?

BUNKER. Had lumbago when I was seven.

GRANDMA. Humph, gamble, play cards, bet on races, go around raising Cain with a lot of young devils at night?

BUNKER. No, I don't. *(Defiantly.)*

FLAPPER. *(Ecstatic.)* I perfectly knew he didn't. I knew she'd admire you. *(To GRANDMA)* How do you like his hair brushed that way . . .

GRANDMA. Um. I don't know. *(Doubtfully to BUNKER.)* What in time have you done? Haven't you ever had any fun . . .

BUNKER. (*Hotly, jumping up.*) Dman it all, you've made me leave out a word . . .

GRANDMA. (*Nods to FLAPPER*) Good, he shows signs of life.

FLAPPER. (*Jumps up.*) I should perfectly think so, and he's over an inch taller than I am, too.

GRANDMA. (*Measuring BUNKER with her eye.*) A-um . . .

FLAPPER. You show her. (*Grabs his arm, whirls him around and stands with back to his.*)

GRANDMA. Stand up straight, you're scrooching . . .

FLAPPER. Not a weeniest bit.

GRANDMA. Um—well, Marie's like her father. She never set her mind on anything yet a—that she didn't get it. (*BUNKER whirls around in alarm, only to meet the FLAPPER's determined little smile, just as POPS sticks his head out of den L.2E.*)

POPS. C'me here, take letter President W son, Washington Executive Mansion . . . (*Disappears into den still dictating. BUNKER, his whole being expressing relief, grabs paper and pencil and bolts across den, shutting door after him.*)

FLAPPER. (*Happily.*) It's all right, Grandma. My mind's just perfectly made up.

GRANDMA. Now, Marie, be sensible, how can you know. A child your age.

FLAPPER. (*Calmly.*) I knew it the very first second I ever saw him, outside the office. Then Pops had just climbed into the car grunting like anything. He was on the sidewalk and bowed. I asked Pops who he was, and when I looked back, something went over me just like that. I can't tell how, but I knew . . .

GRANDMA. But you can't tell about him.

FLAPPER. Oh, splash. I know about him just

the same way. You can't tell how, it perfectly comes over you . . .

GRANDMA. Um . . .

FLAPPER. He makes me furious sometimes, too. Doesn't know his own mind or anything. Just because he's a man. But it's sure to be all right soon. Sure as sure, you'll see.

GRANDMA. (*Resigned.*) Well, there's going to be an awful rumpus. You mother'll never see it our way . . . (*BUNKER opens door of den and starts cautiously out, closing door quietly.*)

FLAPPER. (*Whose back is to door.*) Grandma, I don't care. I've got the right to choose the father of my own children, I've got the right . . . (*BUNKER jumps with horror and reaches for the door knob to retreat again, but GRANDMA sees him.*)

GRANDMA. Come here, young man.

BUNKER. Oh, over there, you mean.

GRANDMA. No nonsense, come here to me, sit down. (*Seizes his hand, seated, GRANDMA between BUNKER and her, holding their hands.*) You're a couple of childern. Why, when I was your age, why I was married two years . . .

FLAPPER. Had you, Grandma?

GRANDMA. And your father, my little Jim, was crawling about under my feet as I did the housework. (*To BUNKER.*) Are you listening?

FLAPPER. Are you?

BUNKER. I—I—almost think I heard you.

GRANDMA. (*To BUNKER*) People married early then—stayed married—and raised big families; they didn't wait to grow rich first. Why, Tom, your father's father, my dear, hadn't much when I took him. Just some cleared land and a yoke of nice fat steers.

BUNKER. Nice fat steers?

GRANDMA. (*Severely.*) Yes, to plow with; that makes you smile, eh?

BUNKER. No, no, on the contrary . . .

GRANDMA. Humph, I'll say frankly that I wouldn't marry you myself.

FLAPPER. (*Indignantly.*) Grandma.

GRANDMA. Well, that's nothing to his discredit, and it isn't a question of me anyway . . . (*Turns on BUNKER.*) Every woman with a head on her knows what she wants when she sees it. And nowadays, thanks to the efforts of a few noble leaders of our sex, she has the right and courage to take it.

BUNKER. (*Wretchedly.*) I—I beg your pardon.

GRANDMA. You needn't. (*Nods to FLAPPER.*) I haven't wasted any time talking to her. If she doesn't know at nineteen—she never will . . .

BUNKER. Never will know?

GRANDMA. Exactly. (*Rises, turns a little, then back.*) Well, I might talk a lot of that stuff about marriage being a serious business, but I shan't. Marriage isn't half as serious as living alone is—eh?

BUNKER. (*Weakly*) Well, I've always ived alone.

GRANDMA. Oh, don't tell me what you've always, that isn't the point . . .

BUNKER. Wh-what is the point?

GRANDMA. (*Disapprovingly.*) Hum—the point is—that first, last, always, it depends on the girl—and I don't believe in long engagements.

(*Stares at him severely a moment, then turns and walks off L.C. and upstairs. BUNKER and FLAPPER are L. side by side on the window seat. They are silent. BUNKER keeps trying to swallow, she starts to rise, suddenly BUNKER is on his feet clasping her tightly in his arms and kissing her.*)

BUNKER. Marie . . .

FLAPPER. I knew it, I knew it, ever so long ago, from the very first moment.

BUNKER. (*Stammering, aghast at what he has done.*) Di-did you . . .

FLAPPER. Something went over me, just like that. When did you first know?

BUNKER. (*Gulping.*) Me? From, from the very first, something went over me—just like that . . .

FLAPPER. You made me so afraid of you . . .

BUNKER. Me? Never meant to—couldn't help it.

FLAPPER. I'm horribly shy, but I knew it had to be. I felt powerless.

BUNKER. I know . . . (*Is about to take FLAPPER in his arms again when POPS comes hobbling out from den.*)

POPS. Where's the letter. (*Sees two figures together.*) Gr-e-e-e-eat Godfrey.

FLAPPER. (*Calm'y grabs BUNKER's sleeves and pretends to be removing speck from eye.*) There, now, twirl the other eye. Oh, oh, Pops, Mr. Bean has something in his eye . . .

POPS. (*Suspiciously.*) Humph . . . jest what I was thinking . . . (*Starts at them.*)

FLAPPER. (*Pretending a successful operation.*) There now you can finish your letters . . . (*Apart.*) Leave it to me. Leave it all to me, I've always managed . . .

POPS. (*Suspiciously.*) What's that?

FLAPPER. I told him if it hurts he must rub the other eye. (*Crossing to hall, light-heartedly.*) See you all later.

(BUNKER is speechless, to cover his confusion he

rubs the other eye industriously. Enter man servant, who announces:)

LOUIS. Mr. Larabee.

POPS. Send him in. (*Exit servant, to BUNKER.*)
Sed down. Been waiting for him. Know why . . .

BUNKER. (*Brightly as to a pal.*) Business, I suppose, Mr. Breede. Big pot open . . .

POLS. Haugh . . .

(*Enter LARABEE L.C.*)

LARABEE. Breede, there's a leak in your office. Plug pulled this morning. Kennedy and Balch bidding Federal up to the ceiling . . .

POPS. Hol' on, Larabee, just a moment . . .
(*Sharply, turns to BUNKER.*) You got fifty shares Fed'ral 'Spress stock, ain't you.

BUNKER. (*Surprised.*) Yes, sir.

POPS. How long you had it.

BUNKER. Aunt bought it five years ago.

LARABEE. (*Impatiently.*) But, really, J. B.

POPS. Wait . . . (*To BUNKER.*) Want to sell?

BUNKER. I think not, just now, you see, I have a kind of a sort of a plan about that stock . . .

LARABEE. Plan, hear that, J. B.

POPS. Wait—can'tcha . . . (*To BUNKER*) Lar'-bee phoned me half an hour ago, you been buying Fed'ral 'Spress lately from Kennedy and Balch on margin, that's so.

BUNKER. Yes. You see, I've sort of a . . .

POPS. Don't say that again, how much d'you hold—eh?

BUNKER. A block or two, several margins of it.

LARABEE. Ah, ha, how many shares . . .

BUNKER. (*Imitating LARABEE's manner*) Have

to ask Kennedy and Balch, my brokers, I guess, about some seven or eight hundred . . .

POPS. Plain enough. Leak in the office. Who's behind you?

BUNKER. Ram-tah . . .

POPS. Eh—what . . .

LARABEE. Who? R. M. Taw?

POPS. Who's that? Know him, Larabee?

LARABEE. Some low down shyster. Snake in the grass. We'll get his number.

POPS. Been plowing with our heifer, eh?

BUNKER. (*Scornfully.*) Your heifer. No, I bought a good fat yoke of steers to do my plowing. (LARABEE *furious*, POPS *grins*, then meeting LARABEE's *frown*.)

LARABEE. Come, come, come. (BUNKER *laughs*)

POPS. What's the joke?

BUNKER. Come, come, come, sounds like a song a friend of mine wrote: Break, break, break.

LARABEE. We'll break you, you young puppy. This will never do with us. How much—how much?

BUNKER. Really, you don't interest me.

POPS. What!

LARABEE. Now, J. B., one moment. (*To BUNKER.*) Think we can allow that sort of underhanded work. Where'd the world be, where'd it be. Have to give those shares up, sooner or later.

POPS. The sooner the safer, young man.

LARABEE. Quite so, quite. Sign an order . . . (*Takes out gold pen.*) Tell me what you paid, take your word for it.

BUNKER. (*Wearily.*) Oh, put up your trinkets.

LARABEE. Shrimp.

(*Again POPS grins, but on meeting LARABEE's eyes, frowns. BUNKER walks up to French window*

with dignity, stands with back to them, staring out, arms folded, legs little apart like Napoleon. They stare at him.)

POPS. Puzzle, to me. Swear I can't make him out.

LARABEE. Dammit, J. B., assert yourself. *(Draws him down stage.)*

POPS. *(Cautiously)* Can't. Only stenographer ever found gimme minute's peace. Dunno why, talk awri—he understands me. Jes' drive me 'sane. *(Glances round at BUNKER'S back again. Shakes head.)* 'Fraid he'll get mad's ell, and q uit me.

LARABEE. *(Sternly.)* Here, leave him to me. Now, young man, our patience is exhausted. We offer you one more chance to make restitution for this betrayal of trust . . . *(BUNKER faces him, nerves shaken.)* You're a mere boy. We hope to be merciful, but you are evidently a hardened character. You've acted on secret information . . .

POPS. Feloniously obtained.

LARABEE. Precisely. *(Pause, BUNKER tries to keep stiff upper lip.)* If you persist in your criminal defiance . . .

POPS. Haugh. We shall 'voke the majesty of the law.

BUNKER. The law. *(Miserably.)* But—but but . . .

LARABEE. No buts.

POPS. No 'scuses.

LARABEE. Come now, this is your last chance. *(Sits at table, grabs sheet of paper, takes out gold fountain pen, and begins writing.)* Just a little memorandum to say you promise to deliver your entire holdings of Federal Express to me for . . . *(Looks up.)* For how much, J. B.?

POPS. Oh, might's well be gen'rous. Make it par.

LARABEE. (*Filling in paper.*) Good, sign . . .
(*Offers pen to BUNKER.*)

BUNKER. Really, I don't understand.

POPS. That's plain enough.

LARABEE. Not necessary anyway.

POPS. Well, why don't you sign?

BUNKER. But you see, I have a kind of a sort of a plan about . . .

POPS. There you go again, ouch, damn. Drive me 'sane.

BUNKER. But—I feel—I ought to consult . . .

POPS. Who—that shyster . . .

LARABEE. (*Warning.*) Any attempt on your part to communicate with your criminal backer . . .
(*Sneering.*) Mr. R. M. Taw . . .

BUNKER. (*Srpinging up his eyes flash.*) Ram-tah . . . That settles it, it's a hold up. I—I won't sign.

LARABEE. (*Apologetically rising, going to BUNKER.*) What—you have the—the audacity to . . .

BUNKER. (*Stares pityingly at LARABEE, then sniffs the air.*) You know, they quit putting perfumery on their clothes right after the Chicago fire . . . (*Takes up paper and slowly tears it up.*)

POPS. (*Sneezing to cover the sudden guffaw.*) Ha shaw—ha—ha—hooshaw . . .

(BUNKER takes up hat and stick and walks calmly to hall door as if to depart. Just then JULIA screams off stage. Then her voice comes rapidly nearer, raised in hysterical wrath and woe. BUNKER falters back from door. POPS hobbles rapidly to door, calling to LARABEE.)

POPS. Quick, that's my wife, can't stand female

fussin'. Can't stand anything more to-day. (LARABEE starts after him, but before they reach the den, enter the hysterical JULIA, followed by FLAPPER, calm and GRANDMA the demon. Exit LARABEE L.2E.)

JULIA. (*Wringing her hands.*) James, James, it's the end of the world, I tell you, the end of the world. (*Confronting BUNKER*) Oh, you villainous viper, oh . . .

FLAPPER. (*Firmly*) Mops, you're just perfectly making an exhibition of yourself.

GRANDMA. The child's right, she always is.

(*Enter at back from terrace BIG SISTER and the WASTER with their rackets, they halt dead.*)

CLARENCE. More ructions.

BIG SISTER. (*Laughs.*) We're just in time for the first round.

POPS. (*Exploding.*) Great Godfrey—is this a mad house . . .

JULIA. Yes, yes, it is. (*Wildly to BUNKER.*) You, you—toad, you.

POPS. (*Ruffling his hair.*) What's time's . . . (*Twinge seizes him.*) Ouch, damn . . .

JULIA. (*Weakly weeping.*) James, James, if you leave me, I shall sink right down on the floor and perish.

FLAPPER. Oh, Mops.

JULIA. (*To FLAPPER.*) Oh, you unnatural child. (*Tearfully.*) And I'd just be-been—buying all a—a sort of th-things . . .

BIG SISTER. (*Scornfully.*) Mother, do speak up and be sensible—what is it?

GRANDMA. For goodness gracious sakes, it's nothing at all. Marie's just told us that she and that young man there are engaged. (*General out-*

cry of amazement and wrath and protest. Except from WASTER and BIG SISTER, who burst out laughing. BUNKER grabs back of chair with both hands.) Gwen, Gwen, Clarence.

FLAPPER. (*Placing herself beside BUNKER.*) Do speak up, precious. Gwen's laughing at you . . .

BUNKER. (*Stung by this, to FLAPPER.*) She is, eh. Humph. I'll show her. (*Draws himself up, goes to POPS and folds arms.*) Mr. Breede, your daughter and I love each other. It—it came over us just like that—from the very first. I have the honor to ask you for her hand. . . .

WASTER. Fine.

JULIA. (*Wails, her voice rising to shriek.*) James, you—hear?

GRANDMA. (*Patting BUNKER on the back.*) Well done, young man.

POPS. (*Finding his voice at last, glaring at BUNKER.*) Haugh, think you can marry my daughter, eh. Damn nonsense. Come here Marie.

FLAPPER. Oh, Pops, don't fuss so.

POPS. Fuss, me fuss. That's the limit. That settles it. (*Up c. hobbles quickly to FLAPPER and grabs her by arm*) I'll teach you, young lady, who's boss in this family. Com'mon. (*Starts with FLAPPER to hall and meets BUNKER face to face.*) Get out a my way. Get out a my house.

BUNKER. (*With a pitying smile.*) Gee, but you're a back number. Take a tip from me, sir, have your cuffs sewed on and fall into the procession. Don't you know women's come into her own and can do what she pleases? (*Snatches suffrage badge from his coat and pins it on POPS. JULIA shrieks and turns faint. BIG SISTER runs to support her.*)

POPS. Oh, indeed. (*Threatened with apoplexy*) Come with me, come to your room. I'll give you

the talk of your life. (*Dragging FLAPPER with him he charges at BUNKER, who steps haughtily aside. The FLAPPER tries to hold back.*)

GRANDMA. (*Blocking BREEDE's way to stairs.*) For goodness gracious sakes, Jim Breede, if you dare to lay a finger on that innocent child . . .

BUNKER. Oh, he wouldn't dare . . .

POPS. Haugh. (*Falls back step, thrusts FLAPPER's hand into that of MOPS.*) Here, Julia, this is your business. You attend to her case . . . (*Trots across to den.*)

MOPS. (*Besides herself, drags MARIE to stairs, turns to BUNKER.*) No whipper-snapper of a clerk shall ever marry a child of mine. (*Goes up with MARIE.*)

GRANDMA. Julia. Julia. (*Following her up.*)

BIG SISTER. Mother . . . (*Following.*)

POPS. (*At den door, to BUNKER.*) Get out of my house; no, take letter. Ugh, ouch. Damn. You're discharged! . . . (*Bolts into den, slamming door.*)

WASTER. (*Rising, mopping his eyes.*) I say, wouldn't have missed this for a million. You are a king. (*Joins BUNKER.*) Don't worry, old top, Marie's always got what she wants . . .

BUNKER. (*Grandly.*) Worry, me worry. Why, there's nothing to it, old top. I don't know how to worry . . .

WASTER. Well, you certainly handed it to Pops. (*House interphone rings—goes to phone.*) Ha, news from the front. (*Takes down receiver, listens, chuckles.*) They've locked the kid in her room, she wants to talk to you . . . (*Hands receiver to BUNKER.*)

BUNKER. (*At phone.*) Hello, Chubbins, sure, more'n ever—from the very fust—what? (*Listens excitedly.*) Say that over again . . . (*Listens.*)

Sure thing. You're on. G'by . . . (*Hangs up receiver, turns quickly.*) We're going to elope.

WASTER. What . . .

BUNKER. Straight off. Grandma fixed it. Mops is having hysterics and Big Sister is with her. You've got to help us.

WASTER. Me? I say, that's going some.

BUNKER. No time to argue, see, Marie an' I'll give you half of all Pops settles on us after we've been married—and forgiven. Get that—half.

WASTER. No spoofing . . . (*Grabs his hands.*) Done.

BUNKER. Chase yourself. Grandma's letting Marie out, you get a car round, little old last year's car, see? I'll stick here till you are off an' keep Pops guessing—then I'll beat it alone. Meet me at my rooms, see? Chubbins knows . . . (*Pushes him through window on run, takes up hat, quickly to den door and listens, then goes back cautiously to stairs. GRANDMA and FLAPPER, carrying bags, now come stealing down the stairs. BUNKER with silence and caution conducts them to window.*)

FLAPPER. (*At window.*) From the very first—sure as sure?

BUNKER. (*Starts to kiss her*) Juts like that . . . (*Enter ERNEST from grounds R.C.*)

GRANDMA. (*Seeing ERNEST, to BUNKER*) Look out . . . (*Sounds of auto wheels on gravel, outside.*)

ERNEST. (*Loudly.*) I say, Marie, what's the game? Where you all off to? (*BUNKER and FLAPPER signalling ERNEST.*) Sh-sh.

BUNKER. (*To FLAPPER and GRANDMA.*) Beat it, double time. (*MOPS and BIG SISTER appear on stairs, as they start down GRANDMA and FLAPPER vanish through window.*)

ERNEST. (*Calling, while BUNKER makes wild*

signs to him.) Marie—can't you answer a chap? Where you off to?

BIG SISTER. (*To MOPS.*) Marie . . .

MOPS. (*To BIG SISTER*) Off . . . (*Dashing down stairs, crying.*) She's running away—James—James.

ERNEST. What—running away . . .

POPS. (*Emerging from den.*) Great Godfrey—what . . . (*Sees BUNKER, rises.*) Think, you can marry my daughter . . .

BUNKER. (*At window.*) Think. With Ram-tah behind me—I know. (*Sound of auto departing at high speed.*) Ha, ha, good-bye, Pops. Marie's of age, and she has a perfect right to choose the father of her own children . . . (*Runs off at full speed. All start to follow.*)

QUICK CURTAIN

ACT IV

" 'S little old last year's king."

TIME: *Evening of same day, about seven o'clock. Darkness comes on gradually during first half of act.*

SCENE: *BUNKER'S apartment. An open, almost packed trunk stands R.C.*

DISCOVERED: *The WASTER, hustling out of bedroom with clothes. He throws them down by trunk. Then begins folding suits and feverishly packing. Door bell rings. WASTER looks worried, then goes cautiously to door. Barely opens it.*

WASTER. *(Softly, trying to disguise his voice.)*
Who's there?

GREATEST PITCHER. Bud Matthews . . .

WASTER. *(With relief.)* Oh, come in, Mr. Matthews, come right in. *(Throws open door, enter GREATEST PITCHER. WASTER shuts door quickly and follows him down.)*

GREATEST PITCHER. *(Glancing round in some surprise.)* You Mr. Clarence Breede?

BREEDE. Yes. *(Shake, with admiration.)* I say, I never hoped to have the honor of meeting you, Mr. Matthews.

GREATEST PITCHER. *(Shake.)* Don't mention it. Pleasure's all mine. *(Quickly.)* What's the damage in here. My friend Bean just 'phoned me

—seemed to be cracking under the strain. Said, for God's sake meet him here at once, he'd be right up—matter of life and death. Said I'd find you here and you'd put me hep. What's the idea. I've missed a swell feed right now, but I can't go back on a pal.

WASTER. (*Excitedly*) 'Course not. That's you all over. Fact is, Bunker's eloping with my sister.

GREATEST PITCHER. (*All interest.*) Good boy. She's one great little girl.

WASTER. (*Gasping.*) D'yer know Marie?

GREATEST PITCHER. Had lunch with her to-day.

WASTER. (*Throwing clothes into trunk.*) Fine. The Guv'nor's wild, must be hot on their trail by this time. I've got 'em in hiding, just round the corner—Uganampus Hotel. (*Lifts one tray of trunk.*) Whew. It's an awful responsibility for a chap like me.

GREATEST PITCHER. Are they spliced yet?

WASTER. No. (*Lifts second tray of trunk.*) Hasn't been time. I just got 'em down to the License Bureau five minutes before it closed. Then I had to engage a stateroom for them on the Sunset Limited. She pulls out twelve, you know. Then we had to buy rings and wedding garments and all that . . . (*Try to close lid of trunk.*)

GREATEST PITCHER. Here, let me jump on its neck for you. (*Springs on lid of trunk, WASTER locks it.*)

WASTER. Thanks, offly.

GREATEST PITCHER. (*Jumping down.*) Strikes me you've missed the big trick. Get 'em spliced, my boy. Once that's done the old folks are buffaloed.

WASTER. (*Telephone rings, turns pale*) G-good Lord, I'll bet that's the Guv'nor.

GREATEST PITCHER. I'll fix him. (*At phone,*

disguises voice) Who is it? Who? Misther James Brade? No. Mr. Bane's not in—hasn't been here all day. Me, I'm the janitor. (*Hang up.*)

WASTER. (*Mopping his forehead.*) I say . . . (*Door bell rings.*)

GREATEST PITCHER. (*Speaking at door*) Who's there?

BULGER. (*Outside.*) Ask me—ask me.

BUNKER. (*Outside*) Oh, it's all right. (GREATEST PITCHER *opens door* L.C. Enter BUNKER, followed by BULGER, both carrying parcels. BUNKER is on tiptoe with excitement. Piling his parcels into BULGER'S arms.) Lay these on my bed, Max. (*To the other.*) Wedding garments. Max has been shopping for me. I 'phoned him to meet me here. Bud, I've got a confession to make to you . . .

GREATEST PITCHER. So you told me this morning. (*Step back.*) Now see, here, Mr. Bean, if it's another girl you've been mixed up with, or anything shady, not for mine.

BUNKER. (*Earnestly.*) It isn't, Bud, honest. I've always led a blameless life, that was the trouble with me, too damn blameless, 'fraid to smoke or drink. 'Fraid to wear regular clothes, 'fraid to speak to a policeman. Why, a month ago, I was nobody, see. Just Bunker Bean, a wage slave at ten per. Then all of a sudden, something came over me—just like that—and things have been speeding my way ever since. Why, there's nothing to it. Money, friends, the Flapper, Bud, I just have to sit round and let Ram-tah hand 'em to me.

GREATEST PITCHER. Let who hand 'em to you?

BUNKER. Ram-tah, that's what I want to ask you—to take care of Ram-tah for me. (*Solemnly*) Bud, if anything ever happens to Ram-tah, it'd be all over with little Napoleon W.—me.

GREATEST PITCHER. (*Cautiously.*) What is he, a snake—I can't stand for snakes . . .

BUNKER. Snakes nothing, Bud—he's a mummy.

GREATEST PITCHER. What?

BUNKER. An Egyptian mummy, Ram-tah, a man of vast power but no violence. Wise and good, the last king of the Pre-Dynastic Era . . . (*Crosses to closet door.*) Come here. (*Listens an instant, then takes key from pocket.*)

GREATEST PITCHER. (*Joining BUNKER*) What th' hell can I do with a mummy. I've got no faith in mascots anyway. Most of my pals fall for 'em, but I say they're bunk.

BUNKER. (*Seriously.*) You don't get me, Bud; this isn't just a mummy, it's a—a special mummy. Bud, it's me.

GREATEST PITCHER. What—I . . .

BUNKER. I was Ram-tah. My first incarnation. Bud, fact. I ruled a peaceful realm. Peopled by contented subjects, of course, I was brave and all that, but I properly detested all violence. My palace on the Nile was magnificent . . .

GREATEST PITCHER. (*Shaking his head.*) You poor nut, who handed you all this . . .

BUNKER. The greatest astrologer in the world.

GREATEST PITCHER. Balthazar—why, kid, that old fakir . . .

BUNKER. (*Sadly interrupting.*) You haven't seen the light, Bud, that's all. (*Slight noises off in bedroom.*) Bud, there's no time to waste, you won't go back on me, Bud? All I ask you to do is to keep this key for me till I get home. It'll spoil the whole trip if . . .

GREATEST PITCHER. (*Good naturedly*) All right, Mr. Bean. I guess it won't hurt me to stick that key in my jeans. Let's have a flash at the poor old gink.

(BUNKER listens again, then unlocks closet door and opens it. The automatic light switches on and as the room is now almost dark it illuminates the shallow closet brightly. The headless trunk of Ram-tah is disclosed, with tuft of excelsior sticking up through its neck. The head of the monarch lies on the closet floor. BUNKER gives a quavering cry.)

BUNKER. (*Hoarsely.*) Pull down the shades, Lights. (GREATEST PITCHER, sensing a tragedy, obeys, pulls down shades. Turns up the lights. Meanwhile BUNKER drags the trunk and head of Ram-tah from closet down to C. table. The WASTER and BULGER burst out from bedroom R.2E. Pulling at the excelsior wildly.) Wh-what's that?

GREATEST PITCHER. (*Smiling.*) Excelsior, bo, your mummy's a fake . . .

BUNKER. (*Wildly.*) No, no, it can't be. It mustn't be. I got it from Balthazar. I . . .

BULGER. Balthazar, huh? (*Hurrying forward, sneering, pulls handful of excelsior from trunk.*) Mean you let that old fakir sell you a bunch of breakfast food like this . . . (*Roars.*)

BUNKER. (*Strangling.*) Oh, I might have known, I might have known this would happen to me—Bunker Bean. (*Raves about room.*) It's my name—it's my name. I tell you, "Bunker Bean" Egyptian king, nice and good. Ha, ha. (*Laughs wildly and then almost sobs.*) It's all over, fellows. I'm nobody, just an upstart. I never was a king—I never will be—never, never. I'm done for—through—finished. I'm a joke. Always have been. And everybody sees the point but me . . .

BULGER. And all over a bum mummy . . .

WASTER. Well, that's the funniest thing I ever saw . . .

BUNKER. Clear out, can't you. Leave me alone. Oh, I wish I'd never been born. I wish to to God I was dead. (*Collapses in chair, doubles up limply, head hanging between his knees.*)

GREATEST PITCHER. (*To BULGER, who is still crowing with delight.*) Cut out the joy, see—poor kid, he's all in. (*BULGER retires.*)

WASTER. (*Entirely at sea.*) I—I say, what—is it?

GREATEST PITCHER. (*Faking charge.*) What's the odds, we've got to pull him around and get him spliced somehow, that's our job—say . . . (*To WASTER.*) You get a parson on the jump, and bring him here with Miss Marie, understand . . .

WASTER. Parson on the jump. (*Grab hat.*) Whew. This responsibility's fierce for a chap like me. (*Bolts through hall L.C. slamming door.*)

GREATEST PITCHER. (*Grabbing BUNKER's shoulder, pulling his head up between his knees.*) Now, kid, cut out the sob stuff. You got to come back and pile into the game with a wallop. Get me. What th . . . Don't you realize its up to you to pull the kinks out of your spine, so you can face the parson and take your punishment like a regular man. (*Shakes him.*) For the love of Mike, quit imitatin' a sick rabbit.

BUNKER. It's no use, I tell you, Bud. I'm done for, it's all over . . .

GREATEST PITCHER. All over, hell. It ain't even begun yet. Wake up, you've got to be married in about five minutes.

BUNKER. (*Scared to death.*) No, no, I—I can't go through with it. I'm nobody at all—nobody at all. Just Bunker Bean. just an upstart . . . (*Pleading.*) Bud, old man, you tell Marie I'm not fit to marry her, or anybody. All I want is, just to be left alone. (*His teeth chatter.*)

GREATEST PITCHER. (*To BULGER.*) Say, he needs a bracer. Go down and ask Cassidy for a pint. Hurry up.

BULGER. Sure I will. (*Goes and exits L.C.*)

GREATEST PITCHER. (*Severely.*) Now, kid, I'm goin' to the bottom a this. You listen to me.

BUNKER. It's no good, goo'by, Bud, ol' man, you'd—don't understand.

GREATEST PITCHER. Maybe not, and maybe yes. See here, kid, I'm dead on to you. I've got your number registered, why, you're not so different—there's lots of ginks in this world who never climb into the Big League, an' why not. *Because they don't believe in themselves.* That's all. (*BUNKER shakes his head, but looks up, timidly.*) D'you think I'd be where I am if I'd gone around lookin' for a mascot to boost me. You take it from me, kid, life don't go by mascots, or Jonahs either. A man's gotta be his own mascot. Infield or out. That's right. Why, a man can be anything he wants to be if he only wants it hard enough. If a man wants to pitch better ball than me, he's only got to want to harder than I do. Then he will—if a man wants to be a king, he'll be a king.

BUNKER. (*Startled.*) Wh-what?

GREATEST PITCHER. Sure he will. That's good dope, bo. Why, look at Napoleon.

BUNKER. (*Straighten up a little.*) Bud—d'ye honestly mean . . . (*Re-enter BULGER hastily from L.C. with a pint bottle of gin.*)

GREATEST PITCHER. (*Seizing bottle and uncorking it.*) Here, kid, I'm not strong for this booze thing myself, but there are times . . . (*Forces bottle into BUNKER's hand.*)

BULGER. (*Grinning.*) Gwan—tip your nose back, let her slide an' forget your troubles.

BUNKER. (*Hesitates.*) Wh-whiskey. . . .

BULGER. No, nothing like it. It's only gin . . .

BUNKER. Oh, is that all. Well, I never tasted anything like that before. (*Takes long drink, then coughs and gasps.*) Gee, ough—plenty strong enough for me. Balla fire. (*Straighten up.*) Bud, d'ye honestly mean that—what you said, about being a king.

GREATEST PITCHER. Sure, on the level kid, Have another swig—an' you may believe me.

BUNKER. (*Brightening up a little.*) Well, do—you ought to know. (*Drinks.*) Augh, naugh, greates' lef' han' pitcher in the world. He oughta know, eh, Max.

BULGER. Ask me. Ask me.

BUNKER. (*Rises and puts down bottle on table.*) Say, Max, Bud says no such thing's mascots. Bud says man's gotta be's own mascot, greates' lef'-han' pitcher'n world oughta know, eh, Max?

GREATEST PITCHER. (*Lays hand on BUNKER's shoulder.*) Why, take your own case. Haven' you been making good? Sure, d'ye think that fake mummy stuffed with hay's been bossin' you? No, you've been bossin' yourself. Keep up the good work, kid, that's all. Why, you're safe for a pinch hit, every day.

BUNKER. (*With sudden elation.*) Awry, then. Bud oughta know. Greatest lef'-han' . . . Bud ol' man, I'll be a king if you say so. Lil' ol' George W. Bunker Baseball King, why not. Who's goin' to stop me, that's all. (*Solemnly.*) Bud, s' all come over me, jus' like that. Ram-tah, s' nothing less con'squench, man's own mascot. Bud . . . (*Seizes pitcher's hands and shakes them violently.*) You—you don't know what you've done for me. (*Door bell rings.*)

GREATEST PITCHER. Steady, kid, cock your chin up. The big show's on.

(BULGER *meanwhile opens door, enter GRANDMA and the FLAPPER, followed by WASTER and VERY YOUNG MINISTER. BULGER slips off to hall and shuts door, and in general excitement is not immediately missed. PITCHER has been straightening BUNKER's tie and smoothing his hair as they all come in.*)

BUNKER. (*Soaring.*) H'lo, Chubbins, s'all ri', the big show's on. How are you, Grandma. Got the ring, Clarence. (*To VERY YOUNG MINISTER.*) How're you, sir. Shake hands with m'friend, Bud Matthews here—greatest left-hand . . .

FLAPPER. (*Seeing head of Ram-tah on floor, jumps, drops Nap from her arms.*) Ah . . .

BUNKER. (*Following her gaze.*) 'S—all—ri'—Marie—don't let that 'sturb you—nothin' less conse' . . .

GRANDMA. (*Sharply.*) Young man, you've been drinking . . .

BUNKER. Only gin.

GREATEST PITCHER (*Quickly*) My fault, madam, my mistake. (*To VERY YOUNG MINISTER.*) M' friend Bean's been under a great nervous strain, your rev'rence, just gave him a little bracer, you know . . .

VERY YOUNG MINISTER. (*Nervously.*) Yes, yes, yes, quite so, I see, I see. Oh, dear, yes . . .

FLAPPER. (*Links arm in BUNKER's, giving his arm an affectionate squeeze.*) Bunker's perfectly got a right to do as he pleases, anyway. (*To MINISTER.*) I did want to be married in that little old church round the corner, but I suppose you can do it all right. Is there room enough. Where shall we stand? (*Placing herself and BUNKER before bedroom door.*) Over here, who's going to give me away—Granny or Clarence. (*To MINISTER*) This

is a very serious step I'm taking, and I hope you understand all about it. Because you just perfectly look as young as Bunker. Have you ever married anyone before?

VERY YOUNG MINISTER. (*Stammering.*) Well, since you ask me, that is to say . . . No, I never have. (*Quickly.*) But it's all right, really.

BUNKER. Are you sure you can do it thoroughly?

VERY YOUNG MINISTER. Everyone has to begin sometime . . . (*Produces prayer book.*) And it's all down in black and white anyway.

GREATEST PITCHER. (*Reassuringly.*) That's right, Miss Breede, he can't go wrong. And if you'll take a tip from me, you won't waste any time . . .

GRANDMA. (*Snorting.*) That's the first sensible remark I've heard.

BUNKER. Same here, we've got to make that little old Pullman somehow, let her go, professor.

VERY YOUNG MINISTER. I—I'll do my best . . . (*Opens prayer book.*) Dearly beloved . . .

BUNKER. (*Breaking in.*) Wait a mo' . . . Where's Max. Can't be married without m' friend Max.

VERY YOUNG MINISTER. Really, Mr. Bean, you—you mustn't interrupt me once I've begun . . .

FLAPPER. You perfectly mustn't, Bunker.

BUNKER. Aw'ri, sorry, fire away.

VERY YOUNG MINISTER. Dearly beloved—we are gathered together in the sight of . . . (*Sudden angry voices off, from hallway, enter BULGER.*)

BULGER. (*In a horrified whisper.*) Pops—I say—beat it, everybody.

GREATEST PITCHER. (*To WASTER*) I told you go get 'em spliced, here . . . (*Throws bedroom door open.*) Chase yourselves. On the jump now. Your reverence.

POPS. (*Off stage L.C.*) Which door did you say?

CASSIDY. This door, sir.

(PITCHER hustles distracted wedding party into bedroom, shuts door on them, and sets his back against it, just as CASSIDY half reached over, gets hall door open and lurches in, still clinging to pass key. Enter after him, POPS, JULIA, BULGER, BIG SISTER and ERNEST. They find themselves confronted by GREATEST PITCHER who calmly folds his arms.)

POPS. Who'n 'ell are you. Where's my daughter?

GREATEST PITCHER. (*Smiling serenely.*) Good evening, Miss Breede, I was wondering when I'd see you again. Didn't hope for such luck as this.

POPS. (*Shaking fist under PITCHER'S nose.*) My daughter is in that room behind you.

GREATEST PITCHER. Are you Mr. Breede, Mr. James Breede; honored to meet you, sir.

POPS. Haugh.

JULIA. James, Mr. Bulger, Ernest . . . (*Wringing her hands.*) Who is this impossible person. Throw him out.

BIG SISTER. (*With a sudden strange little laugh.*) Yes, Ernie, why don't you throw him out. You accused me of flirting with Mr. Matthews.

ERNEST. I say—are you going to get mussy again?

BIG SISTER. I'm never going to speak to you again, Ernie, unless you do something right away. (ERNEST *shrinks back.*)

GREATEST PITCHER. (*Excitedly.*) What, Miss Breede, d'you mean that . . .

BIG SISTER. (*Smiling into PITCHER'S eyes.*) Indeed I do, Mr. Matthews. I'll never marry a

man who hasn't at least as much nerve as you have.
Well, Ernie . . .

GREATEST PITCHER. Well, Mr. Whepple . . .

ERNEST. I say, I'm sick of being made a fool of—I'm off . . .

BIG SISTER. (*Tossing ring to him.*) Take your ring with you, Ernie . . .

JULIA. Gwen . . . Are you mad?

ERNEST. I say Gwen. (*Picks up ring*) You're spoofing, aren't you?

JULIA. Of course.

BIG SISTER. Am I?

ERNEST. (*Looks from PITCHER to BIG SISTER, then slams on his hat.*) Oh damn., (*Exits L.C.*)

JULIA. Gwen.

GREATEST PITCHER. I guess we're all a little mad to-night, Mrs. Breede; y'see, your daughter and I fell in love to-day at first sight . . . (*BIG SISTER gives a little shriek.*)

POPS. Gr-eat Godfrey. Gwen, is 'at right?

BIG SISTER. (*Suddenly placed herself beside the GREATEST PITCHER and takes his arm.*) Yes, Pops, dear, I guess Mr. Matthews is right. (*POPS rushes to GREATEST PITCHER, but suddenly stops dead.*)

POPS. Mr. Matthews, say, why you—you must be—are you?

GREATEST PITCHER. Yes, sir; I am.

POPS. (*Seizes the free hands of BIG SISTER and GREATEST PITCHER.*) It's all right, Julia, Stop fussin'. Why, Gwen's done us proud this time. Mr. Matthews is the greatest left-handed pitcher the world's ever known.

GREATEST PITCHER. Thank you, sir.

POPS. Thank you. You, too, Gwen. I never did like that Lizzie boy.

(*A sudden jubilant noise from off bedroom.* GREAT-

EST PITCHER and BIG SISTER *step quickly aside. Bedroom door flung open. Re-enter BUNKER with the FLAPPER clinging to his arm, and followed by GRANDMA, YOUNG MINISTER and the WASTER, who is singing the wedding march. CURTAIN WARNING.*)

BUNKER. (*Glorious again.*) How are you, Pops? Greetings, Mops. (*Goes to JULIA and kisses her.*) Well, it's O.K., everybody, we're spliced. Marie Breede is now Mrs. B. Bean.

JULIA. (*Tragic*) Married . . . (*Suddenly POPS guffaws with laughter.*)

POPS. Now, mother, stop fussin', I guess our girls have captured the two liveliest wires in New York. Why, young Bunker Bean here's just turned a business deal on me—me. Know how much you'll make.

BUNKER. Slightest idea . . .

POPS. I—stock'll be up to six hundred before week's out. Net you round four hundred thousand.

JULIA. (*Cheering visibly.*) Four hundred thousand—Gwen . . .

BUNKER. Four hundred thousand—margins . .

POPS. Dollars, dammit, dollars. Take y' into partnership to-morrow. (*Turns to GREATEST PITCHER.*) You boys and me'll control everything before we're through. Including the Big League. (*Stumbles over prostrate form of Ram-tah.*) Gr-reat Godfrey, what's that?

BUNKER. That's Ram-tah.

FLAPPER. (*Jumping.*) Oh, Bunker dear, I perfectly meant to tell you. I broke that mummy thing this afternoon.

BUNKER. You . . . Oh, what's the odds, Marie, nothing less consequence. 'S little O' last year's

king. (*As curtain is coming down kisses MARIE.*)
C'mon. C'mon everybody and kiss the bride.
(*All congratulate the bride.*)

CURTAIN



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